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" SMARANDA "

Opera in 3 Acts

" S M A R A N D A "

poem by

ALMA HIRSHFELD

Author of: "The Song of the Dimbovitza"

OPERA IN 3 ACTS

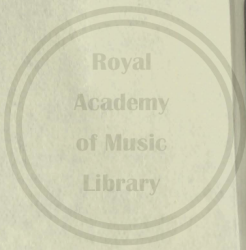
DRAMATIS PERSONAE

<u>Stefan</u>	<u>A young soldier.</u>
<u>Smaranda</u>	<u>His bride</u>
<u>His Mother.</u>	
<u>Ileana</u>	<u>"Sister of the cross"</u> <u>to Smaranda.</u>
<u>Actra</u>	<u>A Fortune-teller.</u>
<u>Father Andrei</u>	<u>A Priest</u>

Villagers, - Soldiers, - Gipsies, - A Messenger

Chorus, etc, etc.

The Scene is laid in Rumania.



" A C H A N S "

OPERA IN 3 ACTS

YÖST

TYPEWRITER

" S M A R A N D A "

Opera in 3 Acts

Poem by

ALMA STRETTELL

Author of: "The Bard of the Dimbovitza"

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Stefan

A young soldier

Smaranda

His bride

His Mother.

Ileana

"Sister of the cross"
to Smaranda.

Astra

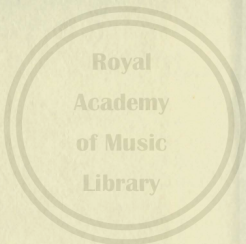
A Fortune-teller.

Father Andrei

A Priest

Villagers,- Soldiers,- Gipsies,- A Messenger
Children, etc.etc.

The Scene is laid in Roumania.



"SMARANDA"

Opera in 3 Acts

Poem by

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

<u>Stefan</u>	<u>A young soldier</u>
<u>Smaranda</u>	<u>His bride</u>
<u>His Mother</u>	
<u>Tizian</u>	<u>"Sister of the cross" to Smaranda.</u>
<u>Ants</u>	<u>A Torture-beller.</u>
<u>Father Andrei</u>	<u>A Priest</u>
<u>Villagers,-- Soldiers,-- Gipsies,-- A Messenger</u>	
<u>Children, etc. etc.</u>	

The Scene is laid in Roumania.

A C T I.

FIRST SCENE.-

Church in background & C. with steps leading up to it - large door - interior very much decorated, - Oriental in character, with palm branches & figures of saints & angels & devils in delicate & artistic colours. To right a porch, leading up-hill to a country church-yard, fallen blossoms on some of the graves. On left, a large practicable apple tree in blossom, under which a round seat. High away in background the village Cross with three or four steps leading up to it. To right a large log covered with moss and ivy.

The drop-scene represents landscape with purple mountains & rocks & small cottages, fields of maize up sides of hills. Small streams running down the mountain sides. The borders should be likewise trees in bloom. It is Spring - the whole scene gay with blossoms & mayflowers, Sun shining brightly. (All lime lights from one side). Branches of trees waving in the breeze.

(Before rise of curtain a few bars of the dance & voices).

(Curtain rises on the Dance)

From left back & right front enter old Men & Matrons, conversing gaily & carrying baskets of flowers & wine-bottles. The men wearing large button-hole bouquets. They group themselves on steps of Cross, on the log, & on seat under tree. The young people enter principally L.U.E. They come in groups of three, i.e. one Man & two Girls, (latter carrying bouquets, Men with button-holes). They enter with dancing step, singing, & stand on steps of Church, of Cross, etc. Eighteen dancers enter dancing. Everyone smiling & gay. Scene must be full of action.

A C T I.

FIRST SCENE.

Church in background & C. with steps leading up to it - large door - interior very much decorated, Oriental in character, with palm branches & figures of saints & angels & devils in delicate & artistic colours. To right a porch, leading up-hill to a country church-yard, fallen blossoms on some of the graves. On left, a large grassy apple tree in blossom, under which a round seat. High way in background the village cross with three or four steps leading up to it. To right a large log covered with moss and ivy.

The drop-scene represents landscape with purple mountains & rocks & small cottages, fields of maize up sides of hills. Small streams running down the mountain sides. The borders should be likewise trees in bloom. It is Spring - the whole scene gay with blossoms & mayflowers. Sun shining brightly. (All time lights from one side). Branches of trees waving in the breeze.

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From left back & right front enter old men & matrons, conversing gaily & carrying baskets of flowers & wine-bottles. The men wearing large button-hole bouquets. They group themselves on steps of cross, on the log, & on seat under tree. The young people enter principally L.U.E. They come in groups of three, i.e. one man & two girls, (father carrying bouquet, men with button-holes). They enter with dancing step, singing, & stand on steps of Church, of cross, etc. Fifteen dancers enter dancing. Everyone smiling & gay. Scene must be full of action.

P R O L O G U E

Scene I.

Dance.

(This scene full of movement, different groups entering during its course.)

Maidens.

He turned his head away
That he might not see my hut,
My apple trees were all in bloom,
The dogs were sleeping when he passed,
He turned his head away.

Lads.

And do ye know the way he went,
Or the likeness that he bore ?
What shape his glistening daggers were,
The fashion of his mantle's hem,
The colour of his steed ?

He was a Heiduck, yet he passed
So swiftly by, we ne'er shall know
What skill he sheweth in the dance, (business)
Or what the shape his daggers were.
He drank from out the river clear,
And cast no glance upon the maidens.

A Lad.

(Stefan is heard singing outside)

(Prologue ends here.)

A Lad.

Greet him with one more cheer !

A Lad.

(Stefan's voice is heard nearer)

All.

Hail to Stefan ! the Heiduck brave and gay !

(Fortune Teller breaks in & pushes her way rudely through the group)

PROLOGUE

Scene I.

Dance.

(This scene full of movement, different groups entering during its course.)

Maidens.

He turned his head away
That he might not see my hand,
My apple trees were all in bloom,
The doors were sleeping when he passed,
He turned his head away.

Lads.

And do ye know the way he went,
Or the likeness that he bore?
What shape his gliding darters were,
The fashion of his mantle's hem,
The colour of his sword?

He was a Heibuck, yet he passed
So swiftly by, we ne'er shall know
What skill he showed in the dance,
Or what the shape his darters were.
He drank from out the river clear,
And cast no glance upon the maidens.

(rustling)

(Stephen is heard singing outside)

(Prologue ends here.)

SCENE 2.

The Crowd. Stefan ! Stefan ! The bridegroom ! Draws he near ?
We love the hero and his name is sweet today !
To call to mind as chimes of Sunday bells.

Maidens. The ways shall be white that he travels by,
The maidens shall come forth
And stand at their doors and give him smiles,
And the sun shall come forth from behind the cloud.

Mother. For the stars love to look on his slumbers so peacefu
And the sun loves to shine where he valiantly fights,
His weapon is light as the leaf to the tree is,
As the first of white bloom on the appletree's bough.
For he is of those who would journey forth gladly
In the glow of the sun with a smile on his face.

Ileana. Watch for his coming ! Proud will be his mien,
The dagger at his belt be dancing gaily.
I'm glad he is a hero who will wed
Smaranda, my dear sister of the Cross.

A Girl. See there amid the throng his mother waits
With darkened brow, methinks she's loth to lose
The hero from her hearth.

A Lad. Go ! let her be !
There should no lowering looks be here today,
Where all is joy.

(Enter Mother slowly, with some older people)

A Lad. Greet him with one more cheer !

Fortuner. Even (Stefan's voice is heard nearer) ye quake with
Yet might the foe full well be driven back,
If heroes as of old could shield this land.

All. Hail to Stefan ! the Heiduck brave and gay !
The song and dance they love, the sword they fear.

(Fortune Teller breaks in & pushes her way
rudely through the group)

SCENE 2.

(Torlone Teller breaks in & pushes her way
rude through the group)

Hail to Stefan ! the Heibuck brave and gay !

(Stefan's voice is heard nearer)

Greets him with one more cheer !

(Enter Mother slowly, with some older people)

Where all is joy.
There should no lowering looks be here today,
Go ! let her be !

The hero from her hearth.
With darkened brow, methinks she's loth to lose
See there amid the throng his mother waits

Smarmas, my dear sister of the Cross.

I'm glad he is a hero who will wed
The dagger at his belt be dancing gaily.

Watch for his coming ! Proud will be his men,

In the glow of the sun with a smile on his face.
For he is of those who would journey forth gladly
As the first of white bloom on the apple-tree's bough.
His weapon is light as the leaf on the tree is,
And the sun loves to shine where he valiantly fights,
For the stars love to look on his slumbers so peaceful

And the sun shall come forth from behind the cloud.
And stand at their doors and give him smiles,
The maidens shall come forth
The ways shall be white that he travels by,

To call to mind as chimas of Sunday bells.
We love the hero and his name is sweet
Stefan ! Stefan ! The bridegroom ! Draws he near ?

The Crowd.

Maidens.

Mother.

Ilseas.

A Girl.

A Lad.

A Lad.

All.

Fortune-
Teller Stay, fools, your merriment ! why, what is here ?
And is it thus ye whet your warriors' swords -
With song - and dance ? Is there no eye, no wit
(with a To mark the doom poised threatening overhead ?
grim Ah ! see them smile ! No thought but for today !
sneer) And yet today their hours of joy are numbered,
E'en now the cloudy wings of monstrous Fate
Loom spanning all their sky !

The crowd. What means the witch ?

Shepherd

Lad. Old raven, wherefore sound thy croaking note ?
That breaks with jarring discord on our song ?

Fortune-
Teller

And thou can'st ask ? thou that about these hills
Feedest thy flock, hast thou not from yon heights
Marked the swift signs upon the plain below ?
Can every one of you not read and tell
The dreadful message of those distant fires ?
Did not your fathers, in the years gone by,
Fight to the death to hold the passes here ?
Do not their bones lie bleaching on these slopes ?
(gesture Think ye, the vulture that once gorged on them
according) Is sated now ? Nay, idlers, dream not so,
He scents this easy prey - and circles near.
(she scornfully points at the people)

Some of the crowd.

Mean'st thou the Turks ?

Others.

The Turks ? God ! say not so !

(Stefan's voice heard singing quite near)

(Stefan is heard nearer)

Fortune-

Even so, the Turks. (sneers) Ah ! now ye quake with
Yet might the foe full well be driven back,
If heroes as of old could shield this land.
Some of the But we have only vain, weak triflers here,
people. The song and dance they love, the sword they fear.
(laughing)

Others.

Even so;
Till more be known, put fearful thoughts aside,
At least upon this joyous marriage day.
The bridegroom comes at last.. Now hail, Stefan !

loom spanning all their sky !
E'en now the cloudy wings of monstrous fate
And yet today their hours of joy are numbered,
Ah ! see them smile ! No thought but for today !
To mark the doom poised threatening overhead ?
With song - and dance ? Is there no eye, no wit
And is it thus ye whet your warriors' swords -
Slay, fools, your merriment ! why, what is here ?

Torune-
Teller

(with a
grim
smile)

The crowd. What means the witch ?

Shepherd
lad.

That breaks with jarring discord on our song ?
Old raven, wherefore sound thy croaking note ?

Torune-
Teller

(gesture
according)
He accents this easy prey - and circles near.
Is asked now ? Nay, idlers, dream not so,
Think ye, the virtue that once gorged on them
Do not their bones the bleaching on these slopes ?
Tight to the death to hold the passes here ?
Did not your fathers, in the years gone by,
The dreadful message of those distant fires ?
Can every one of you not read and tell
Marked the swift signs upon the plain below ?
Feedest thy flock, hast thou not from your heights
And thou canst ask ? thou shalt about these hills

Some of the crowd.

Mean'st thou the Turks ?

Others.

The Turks ? God ! say not so !

(Stephen is heard nearer)

Torune-

(laughing)
The song and dance they love, the sword they fear.
But we have only vain, weak triflers here,
It heroes as of old could shield this land.
Yet might the foe full well be driven back,
Even so, the Turks. (smiles) Ah ! now ye quake with
dread.

Mother. (who has been coming nearer, with indignant mien)

Thou liest ! Know, there is one hero still,
One, one at least like those who fought of old -
Stefan, my son. Now by his father's soul,
And by the souls of all our heroes slain
That round about us stand, I swear an oath
That he shall lead these on !

The crowd.

(Yea ! yea, Stefan !)

Fortune-
Teller.
(sneers) There was once such a hero, ah ! but now
Love's flowery chains have bound Stefan to earth,
Love's pretty tricks have snared him, and he lies
Drowsy with love ! - the hero is no more.

Mother.
(indignant) Blind seer ! Thou dost not know him, - but I know !
I know the sword that in that scabbard lies,
The steel is true, it was not forged to fail;
Or, if my Stefan fail us, - then these hands
Shall from my threshold thrust him out on Death,
And bar my doors against him. I have said !

Fortune-
Teller. Swear what thou wilt ! What Fate wills we shall know.
Yet must I speak one warning. Stefan's bride
Pours weakness, and not strength, for him to drink,
Into the marriage-cup. Take heed of her,
She will not help him gird his weapons on !

Mother.
(aside) Too true ! - And I must see him wed !
(firing up & suddenly rising)

(Stefan's voice heard singing quite near)

Fortune-
Teller. Think'st thou because young Love has set
His seal on me, I can forget
My faithful love, that was of old ? He comes,
And I go hence, - yet hear my word once more:
Though Joy be with you, - Doom is at your door.

Some of the
people. And shall we heed her word ? She speaks alone,
No other gave us warning.

Others. Even so;
Till more be known, put fearful thoughts aside,
At least upon this joyous marriage day.
The bridegroom comes at last.. Now hail, Stefan !

Mother. (who has been coming nearer, with indignance) mien)

Then I fear I know, there is one hero still,
One, one at least like those who fought of old -
Stefan, my son. Now by his father's soul,
And by the souls of all our heroes slain
That round about us stand, I swear an oath
That he shall lead these on!

Yes! yes, Stefan!

The crowd.

There was once such a hero, ah! but now
Love's flowery chains have bound Stefan to earth,
Love's pretty tricks have snared him, and he lies
Drowsy with love! - the hero is no more.

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Pours weakness, and not strength, for him to drink,
Into the marriage-cup. Take heed of her,
She will not help him gird his weapons on!

Fortune-
Teller.

Too true! - And I must see him wed!

Mother.
(said)

(Stefan's voice heard singing quite near)

He comes,
And I go hence, - yet hear my word once more:
Though joy be with you, - Doom is at your door.

Fortune-
Teller.

And shall we heed her word? She speaks alone,
No other gave us warning. Love, the word they fear.

Some of the
people.

Even so;
Till more be known, but fearful thoughts aside,
At least upon this joyous marriage day.
The bridegroom comes at last! Now hail, Stefan!

Others.

SONG. Stefan.

(Enter Stefan)

Stefan. (shaking hands right & left)

I am the Heiduck - all the din of battle
I own no lord ! My spirit knows her freedom,
Greeting I give to all kind hearts
Who wish me well ! To those my comrades
(putting hands together)
With whom I shared my childhood's joys,
And at whose side in later years
I fought for this our land; yet, mother,
Though hot my blood be, (kneels to his mother);
To thee I give my tenderest greeting - hush thee,
And here I bow my head before thee. haunted.

It is thy voice that rules my will unconquered,
(The crowd respectfully goes back)
And this the secret fear that fills my spirit
The fear of wounding the dear heart that bore me.

Even as the tall proud maize doth bow
Its head towards the plain, its mother,
Crowd. (through the crowd)
Asking thee once again to bless me ?

Mother. (laying both hands on his head)

No spark of dread within his heart can waken.
I bless thee, son, and yet my heart
Is heavy, for I know the dawn
Of this thy merry marriage morn
Is but the setting of my sun,
Mother. (caressingly)
My work is o'er, - my day is done.
Henceforth our ways must lie apart.

Stefan. (firing up & suddenly rising)

Only that thou keep steadfast still,
Of giving heart and blood and hand (Bells heard)
Unsay that word, dear mother, mine,
Think'st thou because young Love has set
His seal on me, I can forget
(She is startled)
Thy faithful love, that was of old ?
Nay, rather more a thousandfold
I am a loving son of thine.

(Six or eight Acolytes enter with tapers)

(Enter Stefan)

Stefan. (shaking hands right & left)

Greeting I give to all kind hearts
Who wish me well! To those my comrades
With whom I shared my childhood's joys,
And at whose side in later years
I fought for this our land; yet, mother,
(kneels to his mother)
To thee I give my tenderest greeting -
And here I bow my head before thee.

(The crowd respectfully goes back)

Even as the tall proud maize doth bow
Its head towards the plain, its mother,
Asking thee once again to bless me?

Mother. (laying both hands on his head)

I bless thee, son, and yet my heart
Is heavy, for I know the dawn
Of this thy merry marriage morn
Is but the setting of my sun.
My work is o'er, - my day is done.
Henceforth our ways must lie apart.

Stefan. (firing up & suddenly rising)

Unsay that word, dear mother, mine,
Think'st thou because young Love has set
His seal on me, I can forget
Thy faithful love, that was of old?
Nay, rather more a thousandfold
I am a loving son of thine.

SONG. Stefan.

I am the Heiduck - all the din of battle
No spark of dread within my heart can waken.
I own no lord ! My spirit knows her freedom,
May not by chains be bound or foemen taken.

(putting his arms round her shoulders)

Yes, oh, my mother, there is one can rule me,
Though hot my blood be, and my pride undaunted;
And when beside our hearth I sit and watch thee,
I know one fear wherewith my soul is haunted.

It is thy voice that rules my will unconquered,
Thine is the hand that points the way before me,
And this the secret fear that fills my spirit
The fear of wounding the dear heart that bore me.

Crowd. (thronging round Mother & Stefan)

He is the Heiduck - all the din of battle
No spark of dread within his heart can waken.
He owns no lord, his spirit knows her freedom
May not by chains be bound or foemen taken !

Mother. (caressing him)

I give thee thanks, my son, and ask
Only that thou keep steadfast still,
In joy and sorrow, this thy will
Of giving heart and blood and hand (Bells heard)
To guard from cruel foes thy land,
Dying ere thou renounce the task.

(She is here interrupted by the wedding bells)

(Six or eight Acolytes enter with tapers)

(Enter Svaranda in an ox-cart covered with spring
garlands with flowers. Two young girls are in
the cart with Svaranda, - & other young girls
walk beside it.)

(All run & group round the cart, throwing flowers
at the bride, - after which Acolytes and people
enter the church.)

SONG. Stefan.

I am the Heiduck - all the din of battle
No spark of greed within my heart can waken.
I own no lord! My spirit knows her freedom.
May not by chains be bound or foemen taken.

(putting his arms round her shoulders)

Yes, oh, my mother, there is one can rule me,
Though hot my blood be, and my pride undimmed;
And when beside our hearth I sit and watch thee,
I know one fear wherewith my soul is haunted.

It is thy voice that rules my will unconquered,
Thine is the hand that points the way before me,
And this the secret fear that fills my spirit
The fear of wounding the dear heart that bore me.

Crowd. (thrusting round Mother & Stefan)

He is the Heiduck - all the din of battle
No spark of greed within his heart can waken.
He owns no lord, his spirit knows her freedom
May not by chains be bound or foemen taken!

Mother. (caressing him)

I give thee thanks, my son, and ask
Only that thou keep steadfast still,
In joy and sorrow, this thy will
Of giving heart and blood and hand
To guard from cruel foes thy land,
Dying ere thou renounce the task.

(Bell's heard)

(She is here interrupted by the wedding bells)

(Six or eight Acolytes enter with tapers)

(Enter young Girls & Boys, strewing flowers.
Baskets of flowers & wreaths are swung over
their shoulders with bright ribbons.)

(Some of the children walk backwards,
strewing flowers.)

Chorus. 'Tis today the marriage morn,
And we have brought the bride,
Fragrant flowers all wet with dew, down stage,
From meadows far and wide.

Stefan. Violets and anemones,
And green-leaved myrtle bright, golden bride,
Hyacinths with their bells of blue, earn
And apple blossoms white. that binds for aye.

Smaranda. As upon her way we strew lay asleep,
This glowing carpet seeet, lance a dream drew nigh,
Do thou, Life, with open hands, train,
Strew joys beneath her feet. its in the sun.

(Acolytes begin to distribute tapers.
As the people get their tapers, they
go up towards church, looking out for Smaranda.)

Stefan. Breezes, let them safely bear before, love ?
These marriage tapers home, sorrow to thy heart ?
So their lives, unhurt by storm,

Smaranda. Shall safe to haven come. bode trouble in a dream.
Oh, let us know what trouble - let us ask
Yon gipsy wife that watches us afar.

Scene III

(Here a little cloud comes over the sun)

(Enter Smaranda in an ox-cart covered with spring
branches, drawn by two white oxen, their horns
Stefan. garlanded with flowers. Two young girls are in
the cart with Smaranda, - & other young girls
(to For walk beside it.)

(All run & group round the cart, throwing flowers
at the bride, - after which Acolytes and people
enter the church.)

(Enter young girls & boys, strewing flowers.
Banks of flowers & wreaths are swung over
their shoulders with bright ribbons.)

(Some of the children walk backwards,
strewing flowers.)

'Tis today the marriage morn,
And we have brought the bride,
From meadows far and wide,
Fragrant flowers all wet with dew.

Violets and anemones,
And green-leaved myrtle bright,
Hyaline with bells of blue,
And apple blossoms white.

As upon her way we strew
This glowing carpet seed,
Do thou, life, with open hands,
Strew joys beneath her feet.

(Acolytes begin to distribute papers.
As the people get their papers, they
go up towards church, looking out for Smaranda.)

Breezes, led them safely bear
These marriage papers home,
So their lives, unharmed by storm,
Shall safe to heaven come.

Scene III

(Enter Smaranda in an ox-cart covered with spring
branches, drawn by two white oxen, their horns
garlanded with flowers. Two young girls are in
the cart with Smaranda, - & other young girls
walk beside it.)

(All run & group round the cart, throwing flowers
at the bride, - after which Acolytes and people
enter the church.)

(Stefan goes to meet Smaranda, & lifts her from the cart.)

Smaranda. Beloved, I would speak a word to thee,
While these make ready in the church for us,
One whispered word, no more than when the wind
Ripples across the maize....

(Astra watches them, ominously comes down stage, & then exit for part of time.)

Stefan. (taking Smaranda under the tree)

Speak, golden bride.
But let thy words be speedy, for I yearn
To bind thee with the link that binds for aye.

Smaranda. Hark ! Yester-even, as I lay asleep,
Beneath the moon's bright glance a dream drew nigh,
And in the dream I saw our bridal train,
That crossed a meadow snow-white in the sun.
Thou wentest first, and on the meadow met thee
A snow-white woman, and she took thy hand....
Then mists enwrapped thee and I saw no more,
But ah ! my soul is troubled.

Stefan. (caressingly) Wherefore, love ?
Why should this dream bring sorrow to thy heart ?

Smaranda. Know'st thou not ? Mists bode trouble in a dream.
Oh, let us know what trouble - let us ask
Yon gipsy wife that watches us afar.

Stefan. (interrupting her indignantly) (rising)
(Here a little cloud comes over the sun)

Stefan. Shalt even have thy will, thou foolish lamb,
Fearing to see the bolt in every cloud.
(to Fortune-teller) is I hold, and so could'st think
Come hither, good wife, pray.
And I - made rich for ever by her kiss,
I am the King !

(He draws Smaranda up from the seat into his arms)

(Stephan goes to meet Smaranda, & lifts
her from the cart.)

Smaranda. Beloved, I would speak a word to thee,
While these make ready in the church for us,
One whispered word, no more than when the wind
Ripples across the maize....

(Astra watches them, ominously comes down stage,
& then exit for part of time.)

Stephan. (Talking Smaranda under the tree)
Speak, golden bride,
But let thy words be speedy, for I yearn
To bind thee with the link that binds for aye.

Smaranda. Hark! I Yearn-even, as I lay asleep,
Beneath the moon's bright glance a dream drew nigh,
And in the dream I saw our bridal train,
That crossed a meadow snow-white in the sun.
Thou wastest first, and on the meadow met thee
A snow-white woman, and she took thy hand....
Then mista enraptured thee and I saw no more,
But ah! my soul is troubled.

Stephan. (curiously) Wherefore, love?
Why should this dream bring sorrow to thy heart?

Smaranda. Know'st thou not? Mista bode trouble in a dream.
Oh, let us know what trouble - let us ask
Yon gipsy wife that watches us afar.

(Here a little cloud comes over the sun)

Stephan. Shalt even have thy will, thou foolish lamb,
Feeling to see the bolt in every cloud.
(to Fortune-teller)
Come hither, good wife, pray.

(All turn a step toward the cart, throwing flowers
at the bride, - a few which scattered and people
enter the church.)

Fortune-teller. (A burst of sunshine.) Why do ye call me ?
Why doth the sunshine beckon to the cloud ?
Why doth the morning turn toward the night ?
What will the bride of me ?

Stefan. The kiss of my beloved
Hath mingled with the currents of my blood.

Smaranda. Here on my lips it lies Thy wisdom, mother.
Thine eyes, I know, can pierce the thickest shade,
And see the land that lies beyond this darkness,
Where wends the path that is our future life.
Then read me this. I dreamed last night....

Stefan. (interrupting) Nay, tell her
Dreams are but the tangled webs of our own thoughts,
Not, as she fears, dread warnings sent from Heaven.

Smaranda. Life is so eager in your veins today,
Like sap in springtime rising through the trees,
Tell me the truth alone ! Thou know'st my dream,
I see it in thine eyes ! Doth it bode ill
That I should dream of mist on such a night ?

Smaranda. (wildly)
Where are these shadows - and what cruel frost
Alas ! The mist full surely bodes thee trouble;
And the white woman on the snow-white meadow
Is she who plucketh lovers' joys like flowers.

Stefan. When on that meadow the white woman meets him,
Takes from his lips the kiss of his beloved,
And thrusts it in her girdle like a flower,
Then -

Fortune-teller. Poor blindly trusting heart ! Yet it will come,
Thy wish (She stands over Smaranda (who sits) then.
like a prophetess.)

(Exit Fortune-teller.)
Stefan. (interrupting her indignantly) (rising)

Stefan. What dost prate of kisses stol'n away ?
And shall the baggar dare to tell the king
How he may guard his costliest treasure best ?
For thou, indeed, who dost not even dream
What jewel it is I hold, and so could'st think
That I might lose it - thou the beggar art,
And I - made rich for ever by her kiss,
I am the King ! (half falls back on seat)

(He draws Smaranda up from the seat into his arms)

What will the bride of me ?
Why doth the morning burn toward the night ?
Why doth the sunshining beckon to the cloud ?
Why do ye call me ?

Forbune-
teller.

Then read me this. I dreamed last night....
Where wends the path that is our future life.
And see the land that lies beyond this darkness.
Thine eyes, I know, can pierce the thickest shade.
Thy wisdom, mother.

Smearanda.

Not, as she fears, dread warnings sent from Heaven.
Dreams are but the tangled webs of our own thoughts.
Nay, tell her
(interrupting)

That I should dream of misadventure on such a night ?
I see it in thine eyes ! Doth it bode ill
Tell me the truth alone ! Thou know'st my dream.

Smearanda.

Then -
And thence it in her attitude like a flower,
Takes from his lips the kiss of his beloved,
When on that meadow the white woman meets him.
Is she who plucketh lovers' joys like flowers.
And the white woman on the snow-white meadow
Alas ! The mist full surely bodes thee trouble;

Forbune-
teller.

(She stands over Smearanda (who sits)
like a prophetess.)

Stephen. (interrupting her indignantly) (rising)

I am the King !
And I -- made rich for ever by her kiss,
That I might lose it -- thou the beggar art.
What jewel it is I hold, and so could'st think
For thou, indeed, who dost not even dream
How he may guard his costly treasure best ?
And shall the beggar dare to tell the King
What dost prize of kisses stol'n away ?

(He draws Smearanda up from the seat into his arms)

Stefan. (A burst of sunshine here lights up the scene
until the end.)
Power to cut th' eternal thread
Woven by Love, and binding soul to soul ?

Stefan. The kiss of my beloved
Hath mingled with the currents of my blood.
Smaranda. Here on my lips it lies and I will give it ring.
To none, but keep it safe for evermore !

Stefan. And thine as sweet as sweetest draught of dew.
(Short peal of wedding bells)

Both. I make of it the fragrance of my soul
Fortune-teller. Oh, sightless eyes ! The sun hath blinded you,
The sun that shines most bright on you today,
So that ye cannot see where lie the shadows.
Smaranda. Life is so eager in your veins today, or death,
Like sap in springtime rising through the trees,
Ye cannot think of winter or of loss.

Smaranda. (wildly) DEPT. Stefan & Smaranda.
Where are these shadows - and what cruel frost
Can rob our hearts ?

Stefan. Come back, come back in a hundred years again,
And thou shalt find it safe beneath my mantle still.

Stefan. For I am he, am he th' Oh, never list to her !
Winter is all her life can reckon of now.
She hath forgotten spring and summer heat.

Both. And I will say to death, this is her heart.
Fortune-teller. Poor blindly trusting heart ! Yet it will come,
Thy winter, and thou need'st must listen then.

(thou hast (me (I
When (she shall come in a hundred years again.
(I (Exit Fortune-teller.)

Stefan. Go ! Winter's frost hath checked with iron grasp
The springs of hope within yon beggared heart.

Smaranda. What can it know of Love's resistless torrent ? ath not

Smaranda. Nay, but I fear her words had other meaning;
Perchance she spoke of Death....
(half falls back on seat)

(A burst of sunshine here lights up the scene
until the end.)

The kiss of my beloved
Hath mingled with the currents of my blood.
Here on my lips it lies and I will give it
To none, but keep it safe for evermore !

Stefan.

(Short peal of wedding bells)

Oh, sightless eyes ! The sun hath blinded you,
The sun that shines most bright on you today,
So that ye cannot see where lies the shadow.
Life is no easier in your veins today,
Like asp in springtime rising through the trees,
Ye cannot think of winter or of loss.

Fortune-
teller.

(Wildly)
Where are these shadows - and what cruel frost
Can rob our hearts ?

Smarranda.

Oh, never list to her !
Winter is all her life can reck of now.
She hath forgotten spring and summer heat.

Stefan.

Poor blindly trusting heart ! Yet it will come,
Thy winter, and thou need'st must listen then.

Fortune-
teller.

(Exit Fortune-teller.)

Go ! Winter's frost hath checked with iron grasp
The springs of hope within you beggared heart.
What can it know of Love's resistless torrent ?

Stefan.

May, but I fear her words had other meaning;
Perchance she spoke of Death....
(half falls back on seat)

Smarranda.

Stefan. And (my heart shall) And though she did ?
Have the Fates power to cut th' eternal thread
Woven by Love, and binding soul to soul ?

(thou
And (I be happier than the fi (he kneels by her)

Smaranda. Thy love is sweet as sweetest breath of spring.

Stefan. (In And thine as sweet as sweetest draught of dew.
their surroundings until the Priest calls them)

Both. I make of it the fragrance of my soul
That shall outlive my death. (ing bells)

Smaranda. Ah, blessed love, stronger than fear or death,
Into thy keeping safe I give my heart. come
down L.U.E. slowly, & have watched the procession
go into the Church.)

DUET. Stefan & Smaranda.

(The Church doors are thrown open, showing
the altar & blaze of light.)

Stefan. Come back, come back in a hundred years again,
And thou shalt find it safe beneath my mantle still,
(For I am he, am he that betrayeth not.)

(saying)

Both. And (I will say to death, this is her heart,
(thou shalt
And (I have promised (her that (she shall find it
(thou hast (me (I
When (she shall come in a hundred years again.
(I Scene IV.

Stefan. Nor will I suffer Death or Earth to touch it.

Smaranda. Then Death & Earth will wonder at him ~~whe~~ that betrayeth not
In one against the power of Time and Death.

And though she did?
Have the Ebes power to cut the eternal thread
Woven by Love, and binding soul to soul?

(he kneels by her)

Thy love is sweet as sweetest breath of spring.

And thine as sweet as sweetest draught of dew.

I make of it the fragrance of my soul
That shall outlive my death.

Ah, blessed love, stronger than fear or death,
Into thy keeping safe I give my heart.

DUET. Stefan & Smaranda.

Come back, come back in a hundred years again,
And thou shalt find it safe beneath my mantle still,
For I am he, am he that betrayeth not.

And I will say to death, this is her heart,
(thou shalt)
And I have promised her that she shall find it
(thou heart) (me) I
When she shall come in a hundred years again.
(I)

Nor will I suffer Death or Earth to touch it.
Then Death & Earth will wonder at him who betrayeth not.

Both. And (my heart shall sleep on, Heaven,
 (thy
 There in the dust of (my hand. more.
 (thy
 And (I be happier than the first spring days.
 Men. (thou
 Let no good gift be withholden,
 Keep all sorrow from their door.

(In a clinging embrace) (They seem forgetful of
 their surroundings until the Priest calls them)

the Bridal hymn.
 Stefan & Smaranda walk slowly up the steps.
 the P (Another peal of wedding bells) People
 follow, singing the closing verses of the hymn
 whilst the choristers light tapers.)

(Gipsies, (led by Fortune-teller) bearing the
 appearance of having travelled the roads, come
 Priest. down L.U.E. slowly, & have watched the procession
 go into the Church.) tread, and lighten
 Every load life has in store.

(The Church doors are thrown open, showing
 All. the altar & blaze of light.)

Till the gates of Pearl receive them,
 To be parted never more.

(The Priest appears at the top of the steps)

(saying)

(The Church doors are closed.)

Scene IV.

Scene V.

Priest. Come, children of my heart, who seem to me
 1st Gipsy. My very children, since I held you here, love!
 Upon the font - come, - let me join your lives
 In one against the power of Time and Death.

2nd Gipsy. To us the portals of the church are shut,
 The merry sunshine is our altar-fire;
 Then in the sunshine let us sing and dance.

Both.

And my heart shall sleep
(thy
There in the dust of my hand.
(thy
And I be happier than the first spring days.
(thou

In a clinging embrace) (They seem forgetful of
their surroundings until the Priest calls them)

(Another peal of wedding bells)

(Gipsies, led by Fortune-teller) bearing the
scepter of having travelled the roads, come
down L.U.E. slowly, & have watched the procession
go into the Church.)

(The Church doors are thrown open, showing
the altar & place of light.)

(The Priest appears at the top of the steps)

(saying)

Scene IV.

Priest.

Come, children of my heart, who seem to me
My very children, since I held you here,
Upon the font - come, - let me join your lives
In one against the power of Time and Death.

Priest. Send thy sunshine on them, Heaven,
Send thy blessings, morn and even.
1st Gipsy. May their joy grow more and more.

All. (to their partners)

Men. Let their harvest fields be golden,
Let no good gift be withholden,
Keep all sorrow from their door.

(During the last bars of the dance an ominous
(The Youths & Maidens line the steps, singing
the Bridal hymn.
Stefan & Smaranda walk slowly up the steps,
the Priest preceding them. The Young People
follow, singing the closing verses of the hymn
whilst the choristers light tapers.)

Heaven. Up, up to arms - for on the plains below
Our villages were sacked and burned last night.

Priest. May Thy grace undying brighten
All the paths they tread, and lighten
Every load life has in store.

Gipsies. In the church,
Where Stefan weds.

All. May their Angels never leave them,
Till the gates of Pearl receive them,

Heaven. To be parted never more.
To wed or give in marriage; call them forth -
We need each man - the Turks are closing round us
The (The Church doors are closed.) - to arms.

(While saying: "the Turks" etc, he shakes the
church doors; he might even strike them with his
sword or weapon.)

(The men rush up the slopes to the church
doors & dash them open.)

The people stream out with their lighted tapers.

1st Gipsy. Now joy be theirs - the Heiduck and his love!
What may we do to celebrate such joy?

2nd Gipsy. To us the portals of the church are shut,
The merry sunshine is our altar-fire;
Then in the sunshine let us sing and dance.

Send thy sunshine on them, Heaven,
Send thy blessings, morn and even,
May their joy grow more and more.

Priest.

Let their harvest fields be golden,
Let no good gift be withholden,
Keep all sorrow from their door.

Men.

(The Youngs & Maidens line the steps, singing
the Tribal hymn.
Stefan & Smaranda walk slowly up the steps,
the Priest preceding them. The Young People
follow, singing the closing verses of the hymn
 whilst the choristers light tapers.)

May Thy grace undying brighten
All the paths they tread, and lighten
Every load life has in store.

Priest.

May their Angels never leave them,
Till the gates of Pearl receive them,
To be parted never more.

All.

(The Church doors are closed.)

Scene V.

1st Gipsy. Now joy be theirs - the Heiduck and his love!
What may we do to celebrate such joy?

2nd Gipsy. To us the portals of the church are shut,
The merry sunshine is our altar-fire;
Then in the sunshine let us sing and dance.

The Girls. Yes, dance, come dance -

1st Gipsy. (to a girl) Come hither, dance with me.

All. (to their partners)
Dance while the sun is shining, dance with me.

(They dance) the Turks are near.

(During the last bars of the dance an ominous
murmur is heard through it from without.)

(Enter Messenger & his men R.I.E.)

Messen. Up, up to arms - for on the plains below
Our villages were sacked and burned last night.
Where do the people tarry?

Gipsies. In the church,
Where Stefan weds.

Messen. It is no time today.
To wed or give in marriage; call them forth -
We need each man - the Turks are closing round us
There is no time to lose - up - up - to arms.

Stefan. (While saying: "the Turks" etc, he shakes the
church doors; he might even strike them with his
sword or weapon.)

Sarganda. (The men rush shouting up the slopes to the church
doors & dash them open.
The people stream out with their lighted tapers,
which are extinguished as they rush into the air.)

People. Whence comes this din? Who forced the doors?

Mother. Nay, son, go forth, nor look behind,
Thine may be now the hero's part.

People. Whence comes this din? Who forced the doors?
The people stream out with their lighted papers,
doors & dash them open.
(The men rush shouting up the slopes to the church
sword or weapon.)
church doors; he might even strike them with his
(While saying: "the Turks" etc, he shakes the
There is no time to lose - up - up - to arms.
We need each man - the Turks are closing round us
To wed or give in marriage; call them forth -
If it is no time today.
Where Stetan weds.
Gipsies.
In the church.
Where do the people carry?
Our villages were sacked and burned last night.
Up, up to arms - for on the plains below
(Enter Messenger & his men R.I.E.)
murmur is heard through it from without.)
(During the last part of the dance an ominous
(They dance)
Dance while the sun is shining, dance with me.
All. (to their partners)
Come hither, dance with me.
Ist Gipsy. (to a girl)
The Girls. Yes, dance, come dance -

Priest. (appearing in doorway.)
What means this sacrilege ? What cries
Break in upon this hallowed calm ?

Stefan. Ah, stay -
Thou must not be my weakness now

Messenger. The villages upon the plain
Were burnt last night; the Turks are near.

Villagers. Stefan ! Stefan ! - come, call him forth !
To arms, then, brothers, quick to arms !
For he alone shall be our captain.

(Stefan, holding Smaranda by the hand,
appears in the doorway.)

Stefan. Who calls me in this hour ?

All. Thy country.

Messenger. The Turks are scattering fear and death
Through all our land.

(Exit)

All. To arms ! to arms !

Stefan. (resolutely, after a desperate struggle)

Ye do not call in vain ! I come !
(Mother catches her roughly by the wrist.)

Smaranda. (clinging to him)

Stefan, beloved - wilt thou slay's honour
With thine own hand our Love's delight ?

Mother. Nay, son, go forth, nor look behind,
Thine may be now the hero's part.

Princess. (appearing in doorway.)

What means this sacrifice? What cries
Break in upon this hallowed calm?

Messenger. The villages upon the plain
Were burnt last night; the Turks are near.

Villagers. Stefan! Stefan! - come, call him forth!
To arms, then, brothers, quick to arms!
For he alone shall be our captain.

(Stefan, holding Smaranda by the hand,
appears in the doorway.)

Stefan. Who calls me in this hour?

All. Thy country.

Messenger. The Turks are scattering fear and death
Through all our land.

All. To arms! to arms!

Stefan. (resolutely, after a desperate struggle)

Ye do not call in vain! I come!

Smaranda. (clinging to him)

Stefan, beloved - wilt thou stay
With mine own hand our love's delight?

Mother. Nay, son, go forth, nor look behind,
Thine may be now the hero's part.

Smaranda. And wilt thou be mine anguish now
Who ~~once~~ wert all my joy ? of pity,
Hard as the frost-bound earth in winter.

Stefan. Ah, stay -
All. Thou must not be my weakness now
Who should'st be all my strength. Nay - nay !
(gesture of bewilderment)

Smaranda. The mists rise up and blind my sight,
Wilt thou - my star - my guiding light,
Give me no help upon the way ?

(She is silent)

Mother. (more persuasively, - going to her & lifting her
(gesture as though he is trying to see clearly)
One thing I see, and only one, daughter !
My country ravaged and undone.
(desperately)
Yea, though thou fail me, even thou,
I dare not fail my country now.

(after tenderly kissing her & taking one of
his friends aside, he says -)

Smaranda. Come, help me seek my weapons, friend,
(wildly) That for one day I laid aside;
For when this hand but clasps my sword,
I shall be weak no more !
(Exit)

All. Stefan ! Stefan ! the Earth, thy mother,
Smaranda. Calls for her son yet on Stefan !
Stefan ! by Heaven, I implore thee stay !

Smaranda. (She staggers after him, too weak too follow, the
Mother catches her roughly by the wrist.)

Mother. I charge thee to be silent, maiden,
Shame ! dost thou think the hero's honour
Is light as down upon the wind,
That for a woman's craven word
He should turn thus (gesture) & cast it from him,
A traitor to his land ?
All. For in his dauntless cour (throws her off)
Our surest hope of victory.

Smarenda.

And wilt thou be mine anathema now
Who once wert all my joy?

Stefan.

Ah, stay -

Thou must not be my weakness now
Who should'st be all my strength. Nay - nay!
(Gesture of bewilderment)
The mista rise up and blind my sight,
Wilt thou - my star - my guiding light,
Give me no help upon the way?

(She is silent)

(Gesture as though he is trying to see clearly)
One thing I see, and only one,
My country ravaged and undone.
(desperately)
Yes, though thou fail me, even thou,
I dare not fail my country now.

(after tenderly kissing her & taking one of
his friends aside, he says -)
Come, help me seek my weapons, friend,
That for one day I laid aside;
For when this hand but clasps my sword,
I shall be weak no more!
(Exit)

Smarenda.

Stefan! Stefan!
Stefan! by Heaven, I implore thee stay!

(She staggers after him, too weak to follow, the
Mother catches her roughly by the wrist.)

Mother.

I charge thee to be silent, maiden.
Shame! dost thou think the hero's honour
Is light as down upon the wind,
That for a woman's craven word
He should turn thus (gesture) & cast it from him,
A traitor to his land?
(throws her off)

Smaranda. Ah, God !
How hard thy heart and bare of pity,
Hard as the frost-bound earth in winter.
*I thought to see ye hasten gladly,
O valiant sons ! to fill that place.*

All. Our country wounded lies and bleeding.
She needs thine arm,... Dost hear, Stefan ?

Smaranda. Nay ! Arm and heart are his no longer,
God gave them me. I need them too.
Nor will I let them go !

Mother. *(more persuasively, - going to her & lifting her
from her kneeling attitude)*
Oh, daughter !
Hard though I be, yet see me sueing
To thee for pity on my sorrow,
For if my son forsake his land loved,
In this her need, then sing me dirges,
For Death will not be far from me.

Smaranda. And dost thou count my sorrow nothing -
(wildly) Nothing that all my joy be slain -
The bond God hallowed at His altar,
Must the sword cleave that, too, in twain ?

All. Stefan ! Stefan ! the Earth, thy mother,
Calls for her son yet once again. What can weigh
In all the world against our love ? Ah, God,
I cannot hear it. Stefan, speak - wilt stay ?

Smaranda. *(more desperately)*
Can she not count her sons by thousands ?
Stefan. Hath not her womb more heroes borne
Than this one only whom I cherish ?
For me on earth there is none other,
Then choose ye, choose, for Heaven's mercy
Some other chief to lead you on.
The sun will shine, the flowers will bloom again !
Yet now thy love must yield another harvest

All. Nay, nay, - Stefan, Stefan alone,
For in his dauntless courage lies that love
Our surest hope of victory.

How hard thy heart and bare of pity,
Hard as the frost-bound earth in winter.

Smarranda.

Our country wounded lies and bleeding.
She needs thine arm... Dost hear, Stefan?

All.

Nay! Arm and heart are his no longer,
God gave them me. I need them too.
Nor will I let them go!

Smarranda.

(more persuasively, - going to her & lifting her
from her kneeling attitude)

Mother.

Oh, daughter!
Hard though I be, yet see me aching
To thee for pity on my sorrow,
For if my son forsake his land
In this her need, when sing me dirges,
For Death will not be far from me.

And dost thou count my sorrow nothing -
Nothing that all my joy be slain -
The bond God hallowed at His altar,
Must the sword cleave that, too, in twain?

Smarranda.
(wildly)

Stefan! Stefan! the Earth, thy mother,
Calls for her son yet once again.

All.

(more desperately)
Can she not count her sons by thousands?
Hath not her womb more heroes borne
Than this one only whom I cherish?
For me on earth there is none other,
Then choose ye, choose, for Heaven's mercy
Some other chief to lead you on.

Smarranda.

Nay, nay, - Stefan, Stefan alone,
For in his dauntless courage lies
Our surest hope of victory.

All.

Smaranda. (scornfully)

Are ye then cowards all ? None eager
To bind on you the hero's sword ?
I thought to see ye hasten gladly,
O valiant sons ! to fill that place.
Yet hasten now ! since him ye cry for,
Stefan, my love, ye shall not have.

(Here Stefan, armed, comes forward; she
turns to him)

Smaranda. (agitated)

No, no, for I will bid him stay,
With such a strength of love, his soul
Must needs be strong to break away.

(her hands on his shoulders; he stares before
him as though turned to stone)

Stay, Stefan, stay, - oh, my beloved,
For see, the stars are all too far for thee,
Then stay thou here on earth. Thou must not die,
For even the stars above are glad to feel
They have a brother here upon the earth.

Priest. (looks at him imploringly)

And I, without my star, my guiding light,
How could I live ?

(He is silent. She looks wildly at him)

No word ? Oh, speak the word,
Nay, sure, thou dost not waver ? What can weigh
In all the world against our love ? Ah, God,
I cannot bear it. Stefan, speak - wilt stay ?

Stefan. (putting his arm round her)

Soul of my soul, look up and be thou strong,
Take courage - for the garden of our love
Is not laid waste because the storm hath broken.
The sun will shine, the flowers will bloom again !
Yet now thy love must yield another harvest
Than those sweet flowers we looked for. And I ask
With steadfast proud assurance of that love
That it shall plead no more for me to stay.

Smaranda.

(accidentally)

Are ye then cowards all? None eager
To bind on you the hero's sword?
I thought to see ye hasten gladly,
O valiant sons! to fill that place.
Yet hasten now! since him ye cry for,
Stefan, my love, ye shall not have.

(Here Stefan, armed, comes forward; she
turns to him)

Smaranda.

(startled)

No, no, for I will bid him stay,
With such a strength of love, his soul
Must needs be strong to break away.
(her hands on his shoulders; he starts before
him as though turned to stone)
Stay, Stefan, stay, - oh, my beloved,
For see, the stars are all too far for thee,
Then stay thou here on earth. Thou must not die,
For even the stars above are glad to feel
They have a brother here upon the earth.
(looks at him imploringly)
And I, without my star, my guiding light,
How could I live?

(He is silent. She looks wildly at him)

No word? Oh, speak the word,
Nay, sure, thou dost not waver? What can weigh
In all the world against our love? Ah, God,
I cannot bear it. Stefan, speak - will stay?

Stefan. (putting his arm round her)

Soul of my soul, look up and be thou strong,
Take courage - for the garden of our love
Is not laid waste because the storm hath broken.
The sun will shine, the flowers will bloom again!
Yet now thy love must yield another harvest
Then those sweet flowers we looked for. And I ask
With steadfast proud assurance of that love
That it shall plead no more for me to stay.

love

Smaranda. Nay, tender heart - brave heart ! What pledge of
Greater than this can'st give - to bid me go ?
I see, I feel thy love in splendour rising
Even as the sun that maketh rich the earth;
Strong as the mountain that no tempest shaketh,
Deep as the floods, and mightier than Death.
Then wilt thou, Sunshine, let the mists engulf thee?
Stefan. Thou, mountain, shall the tempest overpower thee ?
Than Death more mighty, wilt thou flee from Death ?

(he looks up as though inspired, & continues
excitedly)

Nay, though Death take me, with folded hands)
He shall not conquer, thee,
Nor quench within me smile and the spring return
The life of Love. me and me.
For I shall remember
Through endless ages,
Women. Proudly remember indeed, poor child,
The love that conquered heart must break !
And bade me go.

Priest. (catching hold of Smaranda, who is half fainting)

He will remember,
Priest. Proudly remember
The love that conquered
And bade him go.

All. We will remember,
Proudly remember
Men. The love that conquered on his sword ?
And bade him go.

Women. God bring him safe to her once more !

Men. (Here everyone surrounds Smaranda.)

All. & Stefan. When the old folks tell how she trembles.
Of the young who fell,
Then the blood of (his heart

Men. (my Brave heart ! Brave heart !
Shall think of thee
More proudly than all our songs.

love

May, tender heart - brave heart ! What pledge of
Greater than this can't give - to bid me go ?
I see, I feel thy love in splendour rising.
Even as the sun that maketh rich the earth;
Strong as the mountain that no tempest shakes,
Deep as the floods, and mightier than Death.
Then with thee, Sunshine, let the mista engulf thee ?
Thou, mountain, shall the tempest overpower thee ?
Than Death more mighty, wilt thou flee from Death ?

(he looks up as though inspired, & continues
excitedly)

May, though Death take me,
He shall not conquer,
Nor quench within me
The life of love.
For I shall remember
Through endless ages,
Proudly remember
The love that conquered
And bade me go.

Priest. (catching hold of Smeralda, who is half fainting)

He will remember,
Proudly remember
The love that conquered
And bade him go.

All.

We will remember,
Proudly remember
The love that conquered
And bade him go.

(Here everyone surrounds Smeralda.)

When the old folks tell
Of the young who fell,
Then the blood of his heart
(my

All. &
Smeralda.

Shall think of thee
More proudly than all our songs.

Smaranda. (after a pause,- as if coming out of a
terrible dream)

Go hence, beloved ! Go with all my tears,
Then go, that Heaven may be content, but let it
Ask for no more since it hath taken thee.

Stefan. (kneeling in front of her)

And I shall see thine image in my heart
Drying its eyes.

(kisses her hands)

And I will pray with folded hands,
(And I will pray, brave soul, with folded hands)
With folded hands for thee,
And the earth shall smile and the spring return
Once more for thee and me.

Women. God help her now, indeed, poor child,
She loves him so, her heart must break !

Men. He, too, needs help, his soul is torn,
And yet it must find strength for both.

Priest. (to Smaranda)
Now buckle on with steadfast hand
His weapons, for against Death's dart
That armour shall be two-fold proof
That love itself clasps on !

Men. Will she indeed clasp on his sword ?

Women. God bring him safe to her once more !

Men. Yes, she draws near !

Women. But how she trembles.
Poor child, poor child !

Men. Brave heart ! Brave heart !

Stanzas. (after a pause, - as if coming out of a
terrible dream)

Go hence, beloved ! Go with all my tears,
Then go, that Heaven may be content, but let it
Ask for no more since it hath taken thee.

Stella. (kneeling in front of her)

And I shall see shine image in my heart
Drying its eyes.
(Kisses her hands)
And I will pray with folded hands,
(And I will pray, brave soul, with folded hands)
With folded hands for thee,
And the earth shall smile and the spring return
Once more for thee and me.

Women. God help her now, indeed, poor child,
She loves him so, her heart must break !

Men. He, too, needs help, his soul is torn,
And yet it must find strength for both.

Protest. (to Stanzas)
Now buckle on with steadfast hand
His weapons, for against Death's dart
That armour shall be two-fold proof
That love itself clasps on I

Men. Will she indeed clasp on his sword ?

Women. God bring him safe to her once more !

Men. Yes, she draws near !

Women. Poor child, poor child ! But how she trembles.

Men. Brave heart ! Brave heart !

A C T II.

(Soldiers rush in from both sides & also
appear on the hills.)

All.

He is the Heiduck, all the din of battle
No spark of dread within his heart can waken.
He owns no lord, his spirit knows her freedom
May not by chains be bound or foemen taken.

(As Smaranda clasps on the sword, the crowd
with one accord shout excitedly "Urrahah - Urrahah")

(Stefan & his men start rushing up the hill)

(Smaranda, as she clasps her hands to her heart,
feels the crucifix that hangs about her neck.
She impulsively stretches out her arms to Stefan,
overcome by a passionate regret that she has not
given him the crucifix as a parting gift.
Stefan, only conscious of her anguish, rushes back
down the hill to embrace her once more; & clasps
her in his arms. She gently releases herself,
& while Stefan kneels down she takes the chain
from her neck, and clasps the chain - with the
crucifix - round the neck of Stefan)

1st Girl.

O Mother, when my hair has grown all white,
I'll throw my veil so close around my head,
That none shall know I'm grown so white,
And I shall know so many, many things.

C U R T A I N.

2nd Girl.

And he I love, he too will then be old,
Will put his cap of fur upon his head,
And I can say at last I love him then.
So often shall I tell him so,
That it will make him grow quite young again.

(Soldiers rush in from both sides & also
appear on the hills.)

He is the Heibuck, all the din of battle
No spark of dread within his heart can weaken.
He owns no lord, his spirit knows her freedom
May not by chains be bound or loemen taken.

All.

(As Smaranda clasps on the sword, the crowd
with one accord shout excitedly "Urrahh - Urrahh")

(Stefan & his men start rushing up the hill.)

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her in his arms. She gently releases herself,
& while Stefan kneels down she takes the chain
from her neck, and clasps the chain - with the
crucifix - round the neck of Stefan)

C U R T A I N.

A C T II.

Scene:- Interior of Stefan's cottage.

(On the left a niche in the wall with a Byzantine statue of the Blessed Virgin; a light is burning before it & it is decorated with flowers. In the drop a door with very firm bars, & also a long narrow window, provided with shutters & bars. Through the window can be seen distant mountains & woods; snow lies everywhere. In the foreground a snow-covered meadow with village in distance. To Right a large fireplace with logs brightly burning, over which there is a shelf with Roumanian ornaments. A large bearskin lies on in front of the fire & a bear's head is nailed on the wall close by. Some icons are also hung on the walls, - axes, guns, daggers are also hung up. There is a stone staircase in the corner of the room leading to a loft. On the snow is a red sunset glow.

A few bars of music are heard before curtain rises.

When curtain goes up a group of village girls are discovered standing in a circle, spinning. To Left a large chair in which Smaranda, pale & sad, is lying back, her distaff loosely held in her hand, her head hanging despondently.)

1st Girl. O Mother, when my hair has grown all white,
 I'll shroud my veil so close around my head,
 That none will see my hair has grown so white,
 And I shall know so many, many things.

2nd Girl. And he I love, he too will then be old,
 Will put his cap of fur upon his head,
 And I can say at last I love him then.
 So often shall I tell him so,
 That it will make him grow quite young again.

A C T II.

Scene:-- Interior of Stefan's cottage.

(On the left a niche in the wall with a Byzantine statue of the Blessed Virgin; a light is burning before it & it is decorated with flowers. In the drop a door with very firm bars, & also a long narrow window, provided with shutters & bars. Through the window can be seen distant mountains & woods; snow lies everywhere. In the foreground a snow-covered meadow with village in distance. To Right a large fireplace with logs brightly burning. over which there is a shelf with Romanian ornaments. A large bearskin lies on the front of the fire & a bear's head is nailed on the wall close by. Some fawns are also hung on the walls, - axes, guns, daggers are also hung up. There is a stone staircase in the corner of the room leading to a loft. On the snow is a red sun-dial.)

A few bars of music are heard before curtain rises.

When curtain goes up a group of village girls are discovered standing in a circle, spinning.

To Left a large chair in which Smeranda, pale & sad, is lying back, her distaff loosely held in her hand, her head hanging despondently.)

1st Girl. O Mother, when my hair has grown all white,
I'll shroud my veil so close around my head,
That none will see my hair has grown so white,
And I shall know so many, many things.

2nd Girl. And he I love, he too will then be old,
Will put his cap of fur upon his head,
And I can say at last I love him then.
So often shall I tell him so,
That it will make him grow quite young again.

Ileana. And I shall say to him: "dost thou remember
 Upon that day, beside the well, when I
 Would never smile on thee?
 That was because I loved thee!

(Girls retire to different chairs, sitting together, & in dumb show chat merrily while busy with their spindles & arranging their work.)

(As the Chorus ends, Smaranda springs up & comes forward, saying - as if to herself -)

Smaranda. I cannot! God! like drops of fire, the words
 Fall on my heart - my sad remembering heart!

(Ileana, who has been singing in the circle with the others, motions them to be silent when she sees Smaranda get up, & now comes forward to her)

Ileana. What ails my sister of the cross?

Ileana. Alas! I know ere thou can'st say, look up!
 What ails the tender woodland moss,
 When from the rock 'tis torn away.

Smaranda. Ileana! Sister! When thy hand
 Touches the wound, I suffer it.
 Thou, my twin self, can'st understand
 How memories and fears are knit
 Around my heart, a burning chain
 Of busy thought - each thought a pain!

Ileana. Then would I let thought fall asleep,
 And tho' with lips alone thou sing,
 Yet join us while thy fingers keep
 The busy spindle murmuring.

(During the "Amen" of the girls, Smaranda, still crying, but more quietly, rises, kisses the hem of the statue's garment, & leans wearily against the shelf on which it stands.)

And I shall say to him: "Dost thou remember
Upon that day, beside the well, when I
Would never smile on thee?
That was because I loved thee!

Ileana.

(Girls retire to different chairs, sitting
together, & in dumb show chat merrily while busy
with their spindles & arranging their work.)

(As the Chorus ends, Smeranda springs up &
comes forward, saying - as if to herself -)

I cannot! God! like drops of fire, the words
Fall on my heart - my sad remembering heart!

Smeranda.

(Ileana, who has been singing in the circle with
the others, motions them to be silent when she
sees Smeranda get up, & now comes forward to her)

What sits my sister of the cross?
Alas! I know ere thou can'st say,
What sits the tender woodland moss
When from the rock 'tis torn away.

Ileana.

Ileana! Sister! When thy hand
Touches the wound, I suffer it.
Thou, my twin self, can'st understand
How memories and tears are knit
Around my heart, a burning chain
Of busy thought - each thought a pain!

Smeranda.

Then would I let thought fall asleep,
And tho' with lips alone thou sing,
Yet join as while thy fingers keep
The busy spindle murmuring.

Ileana.

Smaranda.

Nay, but my heart is all too sore
To sing, sweet sister, or to hear
The old gay strains I sang before.
This is the song befitting best

Girls.

The weary dread that haunts my breast.
In illis malis et benedictus fructus Ventris tui,
Jesus, Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis,
Amen.

(Ileana puts her arm round her, encouraging
her to sing.)

(Smaranda & Ileana repeat the whole of the
Ave Song.) Smaranda.

Ah ! if the swallow were to die little group
Yet were the lark still here,
And if the hail laid low our corn,
The hay were left us still.
But Oh ! a loveless life that hath
No other love beside !

Girls.

(she bursts into tears, covering her face
with her hands. Ileana tries to console her.)

Ileana.

Nay, sister dear, nay, hero's bride, look up !
It was not thus thou badest him farewell,
But with a truer courage - dost remember ?
Then hang thy head no more, but as the plants
That droop their heavy blossoms 'neath the rain,
Yet lift them up refreshed within the hour,
So rise, renewed and strengthened by thy tears.

Smaranda.

An aching through my limbs.

(She turns towards other girls & crossing L.
to the shrine, she says -)

(Ileana leads Smaranda gently to the big chair,
And raise we now our pleading strains to Her
Who can indeed bring succour.

Ileana.

Then rest thee now,
(Smaranda & Ileana kneel in front of shrine &
the other girls kneel down where they were sitting.
During the "Amen" of the girls, Smaranda, still
crying, but more quietly, rises, kisses the hem
of the statue's garment, & leans wearily against
the shelf on which it stands.)

May, but my heart is all too sore
To sing, sweet sister, or to hear
The old gay strains I sang before.
This is the song belittling best
The weary drest that hounds my breast.

Smarranda.

(Ileana puts her arm round her, encouraging
her to sing.)

Song. Smarranda.

Ah! if the swallow were to die
Yet were the lark still here,
And if the hawk laid low our corn,
The hay were left us still.
But Oh! a loveless life that hath
No other love beside!

(she bursts into tears, covering her face
with her hands. Ileana tries to console her.)

May, sister dear, may, here's a bride, look up!
It was not thus thou badest him farewell,
But with a braver courage - dost remember?
Then hang thy head no more, but as the plants
That droop their heavy blossoms 'neath the rain,
Yet lift them up refreshed within the hour,
So rise, renewed and strengthened by thy tears.

Ileana.

(She turns towards other girls & crossing L.
to the shrine, she says -)

And raise we now our pleading strains to Her
Who can indeed bring succour.

(Smarranda & Ileana kneel in front of shrine &
the other girls kneel down where they were sitting.
During the "Amen" of the girls, Smarranda, still
crying, but more quietly, rises, kisses the hem
of the statue's garment, & leans wearily against
the shelf on which it stands.)

Smaranda.

Yea, in truth,
To Her, our Blessed Lady, I will turn.

Girls.

Ave Maria, gracia plena. Dominus tecum; benedicta
tu in mulieribus et benedictus fructus ventris tui,
Jesus. Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis,
peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae.
Amen.

Ileana.

Part, then! the gipsy camp is close at hand;
(Smaranda & Ileana repeat the whole of the
Ave Maria.)

Smaranda.

(The girls rise, & coming in a little group
towards Smaranda, say -) the strength is lacking.
Dear heart, be speedy, I will wait thee here.

Girls.

Good night, good night, Smaranda, & take heart.
Count us as though we were thy rosary;
For sure as many as there be of us
So many prayers shall rise tonight for thee.
Good night, then, and remember, God is nigh!
drops, the distaff falls from her hand & she falls
asleep. As the music ceases
cautiously & Ileana, followed by the Fortune
Teller enters.)
(Exeunt Girls.)

Smaranda.

Yes, go, kind hearts, to pray, & then to sleep.
For when the night time falls I cannot sleep,
For thinking upon him and where he wanders.
Yet sorrow maketh heavy - even now
Weariness weighs my eyelids down and sends
An aching through my limbs.

Ileana.

(Ileana leads Smaranda gently to the big chair,
in which she places her comfortably, stroking
her hair meanwhile.)

Ileana.

And see! Worn out with fears,
The new made wife in Then rest thee now,
Here, with thy throbbing head upon my breast.

Fortune-

Hush! 'tis o'er soon to wake her
To sorrow (A short pause.)
Why should ye bid me hasten
To draw the veil aside
That shrouds her evil fortune?
Ill-starred and hapless bride!

Smaranda.

To Her, our Blessed Lady, I will turn.
Yes, in truth,

Girls.

Ave Maria, gratia plena. Dominus tecum; benedictus
tu in mulieribus et benedictus fructus ventris tui,
Jesus. Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis,
peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae.
Amen.

(Smaranda & Ilsema repeat the whole of the
Ave Maria.)

(The girls rise, & coming in a little group
towards Smaranda, say -)

Girls.

Good night, good night, Smaranda, & take heart.
Count us as though we were thy rosary;
For sure as many as there be of us
So many prayers shall rise tonight for thee.
Good night, then, and remember, God is nigh!

(Exeunt Girls.)

Smaranda.

Yes, go, kind hearts, to pray, & then to sleep.
For when the night falls I cannot sleep,
For thinking upon him and where he wanders.
Yet sorrow makes heavy - even now
Wearyness weighs my eyelids down and sends
An aching through my limbs.

(Ilsema leads Smaranda gently to the big chair,
in which she places her comfortably, stroking
her hair meanwhile.)

Ilsema.

Here, with thy throbbing head upon my breast,
Then rest thee now.

(A short pause.)

Smaranda. (restlessly)
 Nay, Ileana, there is something yet
 Leaves me no rest or peace till it be done.
 (in hurried, anxious tones)
 That gipsy wife knew how my fate was written.
 Yea, and I too must know, for she must tell.

Ileana. Hark, then ! the gipsy camp is close at hand;
 I'll seek her out and bring her to thee straight.

Smaranda. (trying to rise)
 I would go with thee, but the strength is lacking.
 Dear heart, be speedy, I will wait thee here.

(Ileana hurries out. It has been growing darker &
 darker; no light except the light from the fire.
 Smaranda goes back to chair where she first sat,
 takes up her spindle, tries to work, - her head
 drops, the distaff falls from her hand & she falls
 asleep. As the music ceases the door is opened
 cautiously & Ileana, followed by the Fortune
 Teller enters.)

Smaranda. (in terror) Nay, not that !
 Let one bright sunbeam pierce the gloom,
 Surely it cannot all be right !

Scene II.

Fortune-teller. Night follows day !

Ileana. This is the lonely threshold
 That no longer hears edly from E. to L. down stage.
 The footfall of its master. edly up to door on L.
 And see ! Worn out with fears, at the words:-)

Smaranda. The new made wife in slumber
 Hath sought brief rest from tears. 'er been ours;
 See ! on our threshold life with laden hands

Fortune- Hush ! 'tis o'er soon to wake her eyes.
 To sorrow's eventide. to know, to love,
 Why should ye bid me hasten must not die !
 To draw the veil aside
 That shrouds her evil fortune ?
 Ill-starred and hapless bride !

Smaranda. (readily)
Nay, Ileana, there is something yet
leaves me no rest or peace till it be done.
(in hurried, anxious tones)
That gipsy wife knew how my fate was written.
Yes, and I too must know, for she must tell.

Ileana.
Hark, then! the gipsy camp is close at hand;
I'll seek her out and bring her to thee straight.

Smaranda. (trying to rise)
I would go with thee, but the strength is lacking.
Dear heart, be speedy, I will wait thee here.

(Ileana hurries out. It has been growing darker &
darker; no light except the light from the fire.
Smaranda goes back to chair where she first sat,
takes up her spindle, tries to work, - her head
drops, the distaff falls from her hand & she falls
asleep. As the music ceases the door is opened
cautiously & Ileana, followed by the Fortune
Teller enters.)

Scene II.

Ileana.
This is the lonely threshold
That no longer hears
The footfall of his master.
And see! Worn out with fears,
The new made wife in slumber
Hath sought brief rest from fears.

Fortune-
Hush! 'tis o'er soon to wake her
To sorrow's eve-tide.
Why should ye bid me hasten
To draw the veil aside
That shrouds her evil fortune?
Ill-starred and hapless bride!

Ileana. Would I could share her burden - God !
Let me not helpless stand and see
The tempest overwhelm her soul !

Fortune-teller. Nay, when the storm in fury
Across the lowland breaks,
The mountain cannot shield it,
Each its own burden takes.
Yet stay - let us be ready
To cheer her - for she wakes.

Ileana. (Smaranda springs up & seizes the hands of the Fortune-teller.)

Smaranda. Thank God, at last, at last ye come !
Quick ! tell me what these eyes have read,
Oh, tell me how our fate is written !

Fortune-teller. Did I not tell thee once, poor child,
That morning when the spring bloomed bright,
Did I not say that she must come,
The snow-white woman ?

Smaranda. (in terror) Nay, not that !
Let one bright sunbeam pierce the gloom,
Surely it cannot all be night !

Fortune-teller. Night follows day !

(Smaranda crosses wildly from R. to L. down stage, then turns back, walks hurriedly up to door on L. so as to turn on Fortune-teller at the words:-)

Smaranda. But day hath ne'er been ours;
See ! on our threshold Life with laden hands
Awaits us still, and joy is in her eyes.
So much is yet to do, to know, to love,
It is not time for Death - he must not die !

Would I could share her burden - God !
Let me not helpless stand and see
The dearest overwhelm her soul !

Lilias.

Nay, when the storm is fury
Across the lowland presses,
The mountain cannot shield it,
Each its own burden takes.
Yet stay - let us be ready
To cheer her - for she waits.

Tortune-
beller.

(Smaranda springs up & seizes the hands of
the Tortune-beller.)

Thank God, at last, at last ye come !
Quick ! tell me what these eyes have read,
Oh, tell me how our fate is written !

Smaranda.

Did I not tell thee once, poor child,
That morning when the spring bloomed bright,
Did I not say that she must come,
The snow-white woman ?

Tortune-
beller.

(in terror) Nay, not that !
Let one bright sunbeam pierce the gloom,
Surely it cannot all be night !

Smaranda.

Night follows day !

Tortune-
beller.

(Smaranda crosses wildly from R. to L. down stage,
then turns back, walks hurriedly up to door on L.,
so as to turn on Tortune-beller at the words:--)

But day hath ne'er been ours;
See ! on our threshold life with laden hands
Awaits us still, and joy is in her eyes.
So much as yet to do, to know, to love,
It is not time for Death - he must not die !

Smaranda.

(with inspiration)

O good fresh earth !
Call him not yet to come & sleep beneath thee;
For I would veil my head and be a wife,
And I would bear thee fair and noble children
To till thy ground.

Fortune-
teller.

(aside to Ileana)
Poor human heart, that ceaseless turns toward hope !
Then let her hope ! - 'tis all that we can do.

Ileana. (anxiously)

What cheer thou can'st, give quickly, thou must hence.
I would not have the mother find thee here.

Fortune-
teller.

(to Smaranda)
Not death alone, Smaranda, need'st thou dread,

There may be other perils - but take heart;
I can say words to ban them one and all,
And so compel his thoughts to dream of thee,
That in the fight he'll bear a charmed life,
And guard it well for thee alone... no hark !

(She spreads out the dying embers on the hearth
& waves the hazel bough she holds over them.
A little blue flame springs up from the ashes.)

(After gazing into the embers for a little while,
she begins.)

Thou little hazel-bough,
Thou that dost grow so near the river
That it is fain to kiss thee,
Thou that wilt never see the sun,
Because thou growest all too near the river...

Mother.

Fortune-teller.

Fall on the ashes gently - do not stir them,
For ashes love to slumber;
Hide close beneath them - and then go thy way,
Thou little hazel-bough,
Of bitter anguish turned to gall.

(with inscription)

O good fresh earth !
Call him not yet to come & sleep beneath thee;
For I would veil my head and be a wife,
And I would bear thee fair and noble children
To till thy ground.

(aside to Ileana)

Poor human heart, that ceaseless turns toward hope !
Then let her hope ! - 'tis all that we can do.

Fortune-
teller.

Ileana. (anxiously)

What cheer thou can'st, give quickly, thou must hence.
I would not have the mother find thee here.

(to Smaranda)

Fortune-
teller.

Not death alone, Smaranda, need'st thou dread;
There may be other perils - but take heart;
I can say words to ban them one and all,
And so compel his thoughts to dream of thee,
That in the night he'll bear a charmed life,
And guard it well for thee alone... no harm !

(She spreads out the dying embers on the hearth
& waves the hazel bough she holds over them.
A little blue flame springs up from the ashes.)
After gazing into the embers for a little while,
she begins.)

Thou little hazel-bough,
Thou shalt dost grow so near the river
That it is vain to kiss thee,
Thou shalt wilt never see the sun,
Because thou growest all too near the river...

Tell on the ashes gently - do not stir them,
For ashes love to slumber;
Hide close beneath them - and then go thy way,
Thou little hazel-bough.

Then shall the tree from which thou camest forth
Bear loveliest buds in April,
If thou wilt go thither where I shall bid thee,
Where her beloved dwells.

He sleeps. Now shall thou ask him if he dream,
And bid him dream of her.

Thou shalt become the sorrow of his heart,
O little hazel-bough;
And tell him that the sorrow of his heart
Dreams but of him;
Thou shalt disturb his life with a desire.

Where is her sweetheart ?- speak, when will he come?
I have charged sleep to leave him;
The water that he drinks to bring before him
In every drop her image;
The fragrance of his bread, to call her kiss
To his remembrance.
His couch shall murmur all her songs to him
The whiteness of her veil encompass him
Even as the light;
Her step shall sound unceasing in his ears,
And it shall seem to him
As though he saw her always coming toward him,
Yet never reach the goal.

O speak ! What battle ?

(Enter Mother hastily as Fortune-teller says the
last words. She has a lantern in her hand, & is
followed by some women & children, also holding
lanterns. Their clothes are covered with snow.
She scatters the group scornfully, saying -)

Mother. (Thou here, dark pressager of ill !
And would'st with poisoned whispers still
Cast on this house the taint of shame ?

People. For shelter we have flown to thee,
Fortune-teller. For home lies hidden in the wood.

With no intent of ill I came,
Woman, - and this thy word I scorn.
Knowing full well it is but born
Of bitter anguish turned to gall.

Are they upon us ?

Then shall the tree from which thou camest forth
Bear loveliest buds in April,
If thou wilt go thither where I shall bid thee,
Where her beloved dwells.
He sleeps. Now shall thou ask him if he dream,
And bid him dream of her.

Thou shalt become the sorrow of his heart,
O little hazel-bough;
And tell him that the sorrow of his heart
Dreams but of him;
Thou shalt disturb his life with a desire.

Where is her sweetheart? - speak, when will he come?
I have charged sleep to leave him;
The water that he drinks to bring before him
In every drop her image;
The fragrance of his bread, to call her kiss
To his remembrance.
His couch shall murmur all her songs to him
The whiteness of her veil encompass him
Even as the light;
Her step shall sound unceasing in his ears,
And it shall seem to him
As though he saw her always coming toward him,
Yet never reach the goal.

(Enter Mother hastily as Fortune-teller says the
last words. She has a lantern in her hand, & is
followed by some women & children, also holding
lanterns. Their clothes are covered with snow.
She scatters the group scornfully, saying -)

Then here, dark presager of ill!
And wouldst with poisoned whispers still
Cast on this house the taint of shame?

Mother.

Fortune-teller.

With no intent of ill I came,
Woman, - and this thy word I scorn.
Knowing full well it is but born
Of bitter anguish turned to gall.

A Woman.

Fortune-teller.

We have seen
I came to bring some word of cheer
To this poor maiden, sorrow's thrall; can,
If light indeed may enter here,
Or any soul may comfort bring
To such a house as this that lies bars !
'Neath the dark shadow of Death's wing.

Mother.

Smaranda.

Death ! Is it Stefan, say, that dies ?
up bars; others go to door & do likewise.
(The stage is only lit by their lanterns.)

Mother.

Hence ! what can spells avail us now -
Strong arms, brave hearts we need, I trow !

A Woman.

(listening at door) (in terrified tones)

Fortune-teller.

'Twas but in time, for I can hear
I go, - but can ye banish Fate ?
The day will come when, all too late,
Ye shall do homage to her power.

A Boy.

My dagger thirsts for him !

Smaranda.

Ah ! where is Stefan in this hour ?

Mother. (solemnly)

Be still.
I gave my hero, O Land, to thee !
And honour guards him where'er he be.

Mother. (adds)

But Fate forbids that he should shield,
His hearth from the rage of the battle-field.
Were all our women safe in hiding
Ere ye came hither ?

All.

O speak ! What battle ?

Women.

Every one.

Mother.

The Turks draw nigh !
The passes are conquered, - ly a knocking is
Hark there, a cry ! They all blow out the lanterns
& the stage is left in total darkness, save for
the light of the fire. Ories among the women.
(A group of women & children rush in with lanterns)
calling "Smaranda" !)

People.

For shelter we have flown to thee,
Whose home lies hidden in the wood.
These doors are strong !

Smaranda.

I hear his voice ! 'Tis Stefan calls !

Mother.

Come, enter all.
We will defend our home together.
Are they upon us ?

Fortune-
teller.

I came to bring some word of cheer
To this poor maiden, sorrow's thrall;
If light indeed may enter here,
Or any soul may comfort bring
To such a house as this that lies
'Neath the dark shadow of Death's wing.

Smarranda.

Death! Is it Stefan, say, that dies?

Mother.

Hence! What can spells avail us now -
Strong arms, brave hearts we need, I grow!

Fortune-
teller.

I go, - but can ye banish Fate?
The day will come when, all too late,
Ye shall do homage to her power.

Smarranda.

Ah! where is Stefan in this hour?

Mother. (solemnly)

I gave my hero, O Land, to thee!
And honour guards him where'er he be.
But Fate forbids that he should shield,
His heart from the rage of the battle-field.

All.

O speak! What battle?

Mother.

The passes are conquered, -
The Turks draw nigh!
Hark there, a cry!

(A group of women & children rush in with lanterns)

People.

For shelter we have flown to thee,
Whose home lies hidden in the wood.
These doors are strong!

Mother.

We will defend our home together.
Come, enter all.
Are they upon us?

A Woman.

We have seen

People.

A fugitive, nay, more than one,
Crossing the slopes, - what can this mean,
Save that the foe is nigh ?

Mother.

The bars !

On door and shutter make them fast !

(Knocking continues)

A Voice.

(Group of women go hurriedly to window & put
up bars; others go to door & do likewise.
The stage is only lit by their lanterns.)

Smaranda.

Amid a thousand. (tries to reach the door.)

A Woman.

(listening at door) (in terrified tones)

Mother.

'Twas but in time, for I can hear
Footsteps draw swiftly, softly near !

A Boy.

One of our foes ! Ah, let me forth.
My dagger thirsts for him !

(Knocking continues)

Another Woman.

Be still.

Mother.

(addressing those who entered last)

Were all our women safe in hiding
Ere ye came hither ?

Smaranda.

(earrings) I hear his voice.

Women.

Hath love no ears ? Dost thou not hear ?

Every one.

Voice.

(outside) Smaranda - Mother - loose the bars !

(A long pause..... Suddenly a knocking is
heard on the door. They all blow out the lanterns
& the stage is left in total darkness, save for
the light of the fire. Cries among the women.
Amid the noise a voice is heard distinctly
calling "Smaranda" !)

Mother.

It is not he who stands without,
A fugitive, and pleads for shelter.

Smaranda.

(making for the door)

I hear his voice ! 'Tis Stefan calls !

Smaranda.

O God ! he may be wounded, dying !

We have seen
A fugitive, nay, more than one,
Crossing the slopes, - what can this mean,
Save that the foe is nigh?

The bars!
On door and shutter make them fast!

(Group of women go hurriedly to window & put
up bars; others go to door & do likewise.
The stage is only lit by their lanterns.)

A Woman. (Listening at door) (in terrified tones)
'Twas but in time, for I can hear
Footsteps draw swiftly, softly near!

A Boy. One of our foes! Ah, let me forth.
My dagger thins for him!

Another Woman. Be still.

Mother. (addressing those who entered last)

Were all our women safe in hiding
Ere ye came hither?

Every one.

Women.

(A long pause..... Suddenly a knocking is
heard on the door. They all blow out the lanterns
& the stage is left in total darkness, save for
the light of the fire. Cries among the women.
Amid the noise a voice is heard distinctly
calling "Smaranda"!)

Smaranda. (making for the door)

I hear his voice! 'Tis Stefan calls!

People. (holding her back)

Keep back. Upon the Turkish swords
Would'st thou rush forth? This is eom spy
Would enter in by stealth.

Smaranda. (Knocking continues)

A Voice. Smaranda !

Smaranda. I knew it, I could swear to it
Amid a thousand. (tries to reach the door.)

Mother. (thrusting her back) Get thee back.
Fears have distraught thy brain, poor fool !
My son turned back, my hero fled ?
Did I not say his honour guards him ?
It is not he, I swear !

(Knocking continues)

A Voice. The door !
This is no foe.

Smaranda. (excitedly) I hear his voice.
Hath love no ears ? Dost thou not hear ?

Voice. (outside) Smaranda - Mother - loose the bars!!

(Mother walks proudly to the door & places herself
against it, saying in tones of cold deapair -)

Mother. I heard a voice, a voice I knew,
But not my son's, my son's no more.
It is not he who stands without,
A fugitive, and pleads for shelter.
Nay, but some weakling who perchance
For thee hath cast away his honour !

Smaranda. O God ! he may be wounded, dying !

People.

(holding her back)

Keep back. Upon the Turkish sword
Wouldst thou rush forth? This is some spy
Would enter in by stealth.

(Knocking continues)

A Voice.

Smarranda!

Smarranda.

Amid a thousand. (tries to reach the door.)
I knew it, I could swear to it

Mother.

(thrusting her back) Get thee back.
Tears have distraught thy brain, poor fool!
My son turned back, my hero fled?
Did I not say his honour guards him?
It is not he, I swear!

(Knocking continues)

A Voice.

The door!

This is no foe.

Smarranda.

(excitedly) I hear his voice.
Hark! Love no ears? Dost thou not hear?

Voice.

(outside) Smarranda - Mother - loose the bars!!

(Mother walks proudly to the door & closes herself
against it, saying in tones of cold despair -)

Mother.

I heard a voice, a voice I knew,
But not my son's, my son's no more.
It is not he who stands without,
A fugitive, and pleads for shelter.
Nay, but some wretchling who perchance
For thee hath cast away his honour!

Smarranda.

O God! he may be wounded, dying!

Mother. (proudly)

A hero counts no wounds, no peril,
Until the foe be driven back.

Smaranda. (firing up)

And my beloved is a hero,
Nor will I doubt him or forget,
As thou forgettest, those his words
That forged a golden ring of faith
About my heart ! He hath returned,
We know not why, but this I know
And swear upon my life, his honour
Is no less bright than then. O help me.
Unbar the door.

Mother.

Death take me first !

Stefan. (outside)

Smaranda, hear, the time is short.

Smaranda.

Who will have mercy, who will help ?
Will ye ?

(turning to some of the boys)

Boys.

We let no traitor in.

Smaranda. (turning to another group of boys)

Will ye ?

Boys.

Did I but heed the dagger
That dances at my belt so gaily,
Thy tears and his blood should flow together.

Smaranda. (to a group of women)

Ye that are wives, doth no voice answer
Within your hearts ?

Women.

His Mother's heart
Should beat the truest, - she saith nay !



Mother. (proudly)
 A hero counts no wounds, no peril,
 Until the foe be driven back.

 Smaranda. (tipping up)
 And my beloved is a hero,
 Nor will I doubt him or forget,
 As thou forgettest, those his words
 That forged a golden ring of faith
 About my heart! He hath returned,
 We know not why, but this I know
 And swear upon my life, his honour
 Is no less bright than them. O help me,
 Under the door.

 Mother.
 Death take me first!

 Stefan. (outside)
 Smaranda, hear, the time is short.

 Smaranda.
 Who will have mercy, who will help?
 Will ye?
 (turning to some of the boys)

 Boys.
 We let no traitor in.

 Smaranda. (turning to another group of boys)
 Will ye?

 Boys.
 Did I but need the dagger
 That dances at my belt so gaily,
 Thy tears and his blood should flow together.

 Smaranda. (to a group of women)
 Ye that are wives, doth no voice answer
 Within your hearts?

 Women.
 Should beat the breast, - she saith nay!
 His Mother's heart

Smaranda. (desperately, to the girls) strength !

If one among you knoweth love,
Let her come forth to aid me now !

(rushes to door)

(Struggle at door renewed)

Girls. (in fear) Ah ! who can tell who stands without ?

Stefan. (outside) Smaranda !

Ileaha.

I am here, Smaranda !
And I have faith in thee and him.
Thou could'st not think thy sister of the cross
Would break the chain that binds us at this hour !

Smaranda. (clasping her in a passion of gratitude)

Had I forgot thee ? O forgive !
Doubt thee I never could, brave heart !
Come then and help - I need thee now,
Now in this hour supreme, my sister,
As never yet before. Oh, come !

(They drag the Mother away from the door)

Crowd.

Take heed, - shame - shame ! what do ye there ?
Can her white hairs no longer claim ?
And reck ye nought of us ? Must we
Fall to the unbelievers' prey ?
Not so ! - haste hither ! - hold her fast !

(They drag Ileana away.)

Mother. (indignantly)

I will not stay to know the shame
Of him who was my glory once.

(Exit)

Smarranda. (desperately, to the girls)

If one among you knoweth love,
Let her come forth to aid me now!

Girls. (in fear) Ah! who can tell who stands without?

Stephen. (outside) Smarranda!

I am here, Smarranda!

Liesbs.

And I have faith in thee and him.
Thou could'st not think thy sister of the cross
Would break the chain that binds us at this hour!

Smarranda. (clasping her in a passion of gratitude)

Had I forgot thee? O forgive!
Doubt thee I never could, brave heart!
Come then and help - I need thee now,
Now in this hour supreme, my sister,
As never yet before. Oh, come!

(They drag the Mother away from the door)

Take heed, - shame - shame! what do ye there?
Can her white hairs no longer claim?
And reach ye thought of us? Must we
Fall to the unbelievers' prey?
Not so! - haste hither! - hold her fast!

Crowd.

(They drag Liesbs away.)

Mother. (indignantly)

I will not stay to know the shame
Of him who was my glory once.

(Exit)

Smaranda. At last I find thee.
Smaranda. Alone I go, - God give me strength !
Stefan. At last I hold thee. (rushes to door)

Smaranda. The night is over.
(Struggle at door renewed)

Stefan. And dawn is breaking.

Smaranda. (seizing an axe from off the wall)

From grief's long slumber,
Back, back I say.
Stefan. And Death to those this hard-won hour be shorter
Who hinder me. These weary moments past ?
Beware ! Beware ! (struggles wildly with bars)
Hence with these bars ! ever in our hearts.
I must ! I must !
God's pity help me !

Smaranda. Strength ! - Oh, strength ! at thy rising
The flowers of my garden bloom again,
And raise their heads that drooped beneath the storm !
Crowd. What madness stings her ? What power can stay her ?
We cannot hold her ! Away, away !

Stefan. My golden bride, has our day dawned once more ?
(The bars yield. The door bursts open. Stefan
rushes in and simultaneously the women, in terror,
fearing an enemy, press to the back & scramble
in confusion into the loft, the boys following
to protect them.) since this one hour is fair.

(Stefan & Smaranda fall into one another's arms)

Stefan. (after a short pause)

At last they end, the endless hours of waiting,
Stefan. Long as the dreary road that leads from home.
The joy that is born of thee ? flowers,
The earth spreads out gladly her maize fields &
Smaranda. The dark, dark days, as black as Death's dim river,
When nought I wist of thee, at last they end !

Smaranda. Yea, she taketh thee joyfully, deathless Sun,
Her heart sings aloud for glee;
She forgetteth the night as a dream that is done,
For a moment's such joy, though it be but one,
Can match with eternity !

Smarranda. Alone I go, - God give me strength!
(rushes to door)

(Struggle at door renewed)

Smarranda. (seizing an axe from off the wall)

Back, back I say.
And Death to those
Who hinder me.
Beware! Beware! (struggles wildly with bars)
Hence with these bars!
I must! I must!
God's pity help me!
Strength! - Oh, strength!

Crowd. What madness stings her? What power can stay her?
We cannot hold her! Away, away!

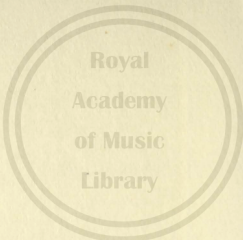
(The bars yield. The door bursts open. Stefan
rushes in and simultaneously the women, in terror,
fearing an enemy, press to the back & scramble
in confusion into the fold, the boys following
to protect them.)

(Stefan & Smarranda fall into one another's arms)

Stefan. (after a short pause)
At last they end, the endless hours of waiting,
Long as the dreary road that leads from home.

Smarranda. The dark, dark days, as black as Death's dim river,
When nought I wish of thee, at last they end!

- Smaranda. At last I find thee. Able, blinding all sight,
Stefan. At last I hold thee.apest & conquering the night,
We are merged in thy glory and lost in thy light,
Smaranda. The night is over,asureless sea.
Stefan. And dawn is breaking.
Both. Oh, joyful waking
From grief's long slumber.. Can'st thou, beloved,
Call up the voice of strong, triumphant faith
Stefan. What reck I though this hard-won hour be shorter
Than any of those weary moments past ?
Smaranda. Joy knows no time & with a touch can kindlet over,
Fire that will burn for ever in our hearts,ht ?
Stefan. (earnestly)
Smaranda. O, thou, my sun, how gladly at thy rising ?
The flowers of my garden bloom again, art ?
And raise their heads that drooped beneath the storm!
Did'st raise my banner fearlessly on high,
When even she who bore me wavered, doubting,
Stefan. My golden bride, has our day dawned once more ?
I shall do aught save keep that banner pure ?
Smaranda. Yea, now the mist has cleared away for ever.
Smaranda. Nay, for thou knowest that I trust thee wholly,
Even as Death trusts its treasures to the grave.
Stefan. Hush, be content, since this one hour is fair....
Stefan. No way but one, - to save this land we love.
No way, but DUET this deed to give my life.
(continues in a tone of exultation)
Our foes are trapped, we hold them now !
Stefan. O infinite love, wherefore count we by hours
The joy that is born of thee ? s part, flowers,
The earth spreads out gladly her maize fields &
To the kiss of the sun & the summer showers,
Nor asks for how long it be, ought to bind me
To faithful service; I gained their trust;
Smaranda. Yea, she taketh thee joyfully, deathless Sun,
Her heart sings aloud for glee;ades hid.
She forgetteth the night as a dream that is done,
For a moment's such joy, though it be but one,
Can match with eternity !e undermined,
Since we planned this night long weeks ago.
I told them that I would steal one hour



Smaranda.

At last I find thee.

Stefan.

At last I hold thee.

Smaranda.

The night is over.

Stefan.

And dawn is breaking.

Both.

Oh, joyful waking
From grief's long slumber.

Stefan.

What reck I though this hard-won hour be shorter
Than any of those weary moments past?
Joy knows no time & with a touch can kindle
Fire that will burn for ever in our hearts.

Smaranda.

O, then, my sun, how gladly art thou rising
The flowers of my garden bloom again,
And raise their heads that drooped beneath the storm!

Stefan.

My golden bride, has our day dawned once more?

Smaranda.

Yes, now the mist has cleared away for ever.

Stefan.

Hush, be content, since this one hour is fair.

DUET

Stefan.

O infinite love, wherefore count we by hours
The joy that is born of thee?
The earth spreads out gladly her maize fields &
To the kiss of the sun & the summer showers,
Nor asks for how long it be.

Smaranda.

Yes, she takes thee joyfully, deathless sun,
Her heart sings aloud for glee;
She forgets the night as a dream that is done,
For a moment's such joy, though it be but one,
Can match with eternity!

Together. O Splendour unquenchable, blinding all sight,
Strong Love, sweep us onward with thee !
Till cleaving the tempest & conquering the night,
We are merged in thy glory and lost in thy light,
The tide of thy measureless sea.

Stefan. (sadly) The song of joy must pause. Can'st thou, beloved,
Call up the voice of strong, triumphant faith
To sing my dirge to me ?

Smaranda. Stefan! what mean'st thou ? Is the storm not over,
Ah ! must the lightning fall & blast my night ?

Stefan. (earnestly) Hast never asked, love, why I come tonight ?
Hast thou not even asked it of thy heart ?
What answer could it give, save one ? 'Twas thou
Did'st raise my banner fearlessly on high,
When even she who bore me wavered, doubting,
And cast a stain on it; then can'st thou think
I shall do aught save keep that banner pure ?

Smaranda. Nay, for thou knowest that I trust thee wholly,
Even as Death trusts its treasures to the grave.
Yet could I think that thou had'st found a way....

Stefan. No way but one, - to save this land we love.
No way, but for this deed to give my life.
(continues in a tone of exultation)

Smaranda. Our foes are trapped, we hold them now !
Threading the passes, they lost their way,
Then came I, acting a traitor's part,
And swore to lead them by roads unknown
Down to the valley, .. with mighty oaths,
And fearful threats, they thought to bind me
To faithful service; I gained their trust;
They lent me freedom for one brief hour
That I might spy where our comrades hid.
Then I hasted & summoned those comrades brave
And sent them forth to the Hanging Rocks,
That by cunning hands were undermined,
Since we planned this night long weeks ago.
I told them that I would steal one hour

Together.
O Splendour unapproachable, blinding all sight,
Strong Love, sweep us onward with thee!
Till cleaving the tempest & conquering the night,
We are merged in thy glory and lost in thy light,
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When even she who bore me wavered, doubting,
And cast a stain on it; then can'st thou think
I shall do aught save keep that banner pure?

Smarranda.
Nay, for thou knowest that I trust thee wholly,
Even as Death trusts its treasures to the grave.
Yet could I think that thou had'st found a way....

Stefan.
No way but one, - to save this land we love.
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They lent me freedom for one brief hour,
That I might spy where our comrades hid.
Then I hastened & summoned those comrades brave,
And sent them forth to the Hanging Rocks,
That by cunning hands were undermined,
Since we planned this night long weeks ago.
I told them that I would steal one hour

Stefan. (liss) To bid farewell to my bride, to thee.
To kiss thee once more, ere I take the kiss
(as) Of Her who waits in the night for me.
But the hour hath sounded, and I must go;
The foe never dream that where I lead
Suddenly down through the gorges deep,
The rocks that o'erhang them are undermined.
(Th) That, waiting my signal, our warriors lie if to go
Hidden beyond - but my horn shall sound,
And the rocks shall fall and the foe be slain !

Smaranda. Thou must not go without a word to her
Who holds thine honour, too, more dear than life.

Smaranda. (breathlessly)
And thou, Stefan ?

Stefan. (moves to door at back & opens it)

Stefan. (more ecstatically) Who speaks of me ?
The foe will be stricken, and those that flee,
Driven back in confusion, shall fall a prey
To our heroes' swords ere the break of day !

Mother. (app) Is it my son indeed who once I loved,
Say, which hath loved thee best, thy bride or I ?

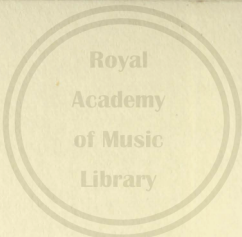
Smaranda. (insisting)
And thou, Stefan ?

Stefan. Both loved me well. 'Twas thou that first did'st show
Stefan. (solemnly) Beloved, pray

That the rock may strike me first of all,
'Twere better far than that I should fall
Beneath the vengeance of Turkish swords;
Mother. (bre) It cannot be but that I should die, is this ?
I would end it straightway and peaceful lie
Beneath thee, O Earth, thou mother mine.

Smaranda. O Mother, bless thy womb that bore him !
For he is thrice a hero now;

Smaranda. (falling on her knees) their destruction.
My hero, above me I see thee shine,
O best beloved, so far above, an save it.
I scarce dare think of our earthly love.
Yet I love thee more a thousandfold,
Mother. (pro) Than I did in those careless days of old.
Thy bride kneels lowly at thy feet
And thanks thee thou hast thought her meet
To bear a part in thy sacrifice. less thee,
That I may give my child to thee !



To bid farewell to my bride, to thee.
To kiss thee once more, ere I take the kiss
Of Her who waits in the night for me.
But the hour hath sounded, and I must go;
The foe never dream that where I lead
Suddenly down through the gorges deep,
The rocks that o'erhang them are undermined.
That, waiting my signal, our warriors lie
Hidden beyond - but my horn shall sound,
And the rocks shall fall and the foe be slain!

Smaranda. (breathlessly)
And thou, Stefan?

Stefan. (more ecstatically) Who speaks of me?
The foe will be stricken, and those that flee,
Driven back in confusion, shall fall a prey
To our heroes' swords ere the break of day!

Smaranda. (mistakenly)
And thou, Stefan?

Stefan. (solemnly) Beloved, pray
That the rock may strike me first of all,
'Twere better far than that I should fall
Beneath the vengeance of Turkish swords;
It cannot be but that I should die,
I would end it straightway and peaceful lie
Beneath thee, O Earth, thou mother mine.

Smaranda. (falling on her knees) (falling on her knees)
My hero, above me I see thee shine,
O best beloved, so far above,
I scarce dare think of our earthly love.
Yet I love thee more a thousandfold,
Than I did in those careless days of old.
Thy bride kneels lowly at thy feet
And thanks thee thou hast thought her meet
To bear a part in thy sacrifice.

Stefan. (lifting her up)
O steadfast face ! O radiant eyes !
(as if half dreaming)
Lead me, dear vision, to the last...
The bitterness of Death is past.

Crowd. (They clasp each other. Pause. He moves as if to go)

Smaranda. Thou must not go without a word to her
Who holds thine honour, too, more dear than life.

Stefan. (moves to door at back & opens it)

Priest. Mother ! - thy son calls yet again.

Mother. (appearing in doorway) Who calls ?
Is it my son indeed who once I loved, ?
Say, which hath loved thee best, thy bride or I ?

Stefan. Both loved me well. Twas thou that first did'st show me
The path I take today. 'Twas she had faith
I should not fall therein.

Mother. (breathlessly) What path is this ?

Smaranda. O Mother, bless thy womb that bore him !
For he is thrice a hero now;
He lures the foe to their destruction.
But ah ! the price - the only price
Is his own life, and nought can save it.

Mother. (proudly)
My son once more in glory riseth !
The mist that veiled mine eyes hath cleared -
I bless thee, son ! O land, I bless thee,
That I may give my child to thee !

Stein. (lifting her up)
O speediest face! O radiant eyes!
(as if half dreaming)
Lead me, dear vision, to the last...
The bitterness of Death is past.

(They clasp each other. Pause. He moves as if to go)

Smaranda. There must not go without a word to her
Who holds thine honour, too, more dear than life.

Stein. (moves to door & opens it)
Mother! - thy son calls yet again.

Mother. (appearing in doorway) Who calls?
Is it my son indeed who once I loved?
Say, which hath loved thee best, thy bride or I?

Stein. Both loved me well. 'Twas thou that first did'st show
The path I take today. 'Twas she had faith
I should not fall therein.

Mother. (breathlessly) What path is this?

Smaranda. O Mother, bless thy womb that bore him!
For he is thine a hero now;
He turns the foe to their destruction.
But ah! the price - the only price
Is his own life, and nought can save it.

Mother. (proudly)
My son once more in glory riseth!
The mist that veiled mine eyes hath cleared -
I bless thee, son! O land, I bless thee,
That I may give my child to thee!

Szorenda.

Ileana.

And the kiss (A loud knocking at door. Stefan starts up from
That close of the half kneeling position he has assumed, & is
about to go to the door when a crowd of men,
headed by a priest, rush in)

Crowd.

Stefan ! Stefan ! our brothers wait !
Thou must not tarry longer here.
Else will the foe suspect some treason
And all be lost !

Stefan.

I come ! I come !

Priest.

O thou that goest forth to die,
For this our land, for these our people,
Thou shalt not go without their blessing,
Yea, theirs and mine I give thee now,
In this the blessing of the Church !
So that they surely all may know
How brave a child, Roumania, thou hast borne.

Crowd.

Thou shalt not go without our blessing,
Yea, his and ours he gives thee now.

QUINTET & CHORUS.

Mother.

The sun when he dieth
doth hide him not.
And thou when thine hour
is nigh,
Thou wilt shine, my hero,
and glow with light.
Because thou goest forth
to die.

Stefan.

Ere I go to my death,
beloved mine,
Once more on my heart
come lie.
And with joy, for it bear-
eth thee locked within,
This heart shall go forth
to die.

(A loud knocking at door. Stefan starts up from the half kneeling position he has assumed. A light about to go to the door when a crowd of men, headed by a priest, rush in)

Stefan ! Stefan ! our brothers wait !
Thou must not tarry longer here.
Else will the too suspect some treason
And all be lost !

Crowd.

I come ! I come !

Stefan.

O thou that goest forth to die,
For this our land, for these our people,
Thou shalt not go without their blessing.
Yes, theirs and mine I give thee now,
In this the blessing of the Church !
So that they surely all may know
How brave a child, Romanist, thou hast borne.

Priest.

Thou shalt not go without our blessing,
Yes, his and ours he gives thee now.

Crowd.

QUINTET & CHORUS.

Mother.

Stefan.

The sun when he dith
Goth hide him not.
And thou when thine hour
is night,
Thou wilt shine, my hero,
and glow with light.
Because thou goest forth
to die.
Ere I go to my death,
Beloved mine,
Once more on my heart
come lie.
And with joy, for it bear-
eth thee locked within,
This heart shall go forth
to die.

Smaranda.

And the kiss of thy bride,
thy faithful bride,
That close on thy mouth doth
lie,
Shall be proud indeed to rest
on thy lips,
Because thou goest forth
to die.

Ileana.

The bird that gave thee its
plumes for thy cap,
Will be glad of it by
and by.
For those plumes will be
red with a hero's blood,
Because thou goest forth
to die.

Priest

My blessing, son, may it
claim thy soul,
When the waters of Death
rage high.
And the sign of the Cross I
make o'er thee,
Will be glad thou goest forth
to die.

Priest.

The Valley of Death

Chorus.

Her kiss shall be proud to lie on thy lips
Because thou goesth forth to die.

(Bus.)

(Ileana, creeping softly behind Smaranda, takes her
hand, pleadingly. Priest meanwhile has gone up
gorge & looking back & seeing Ileana with Smaranda,
he goes on into it.)

Ileana.

Dost thou not fear, Smaranda, sister?
Who knows which way the fight hath turned?
May not the foe be hastening hither?

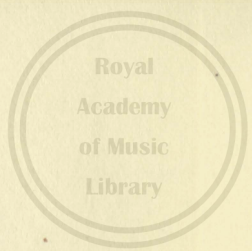
Smaranda.

Nay, fear and I have said farewell.

(noting the scene, for she has been watching the
gorge till now)

Ileana, - see! the snow-white meadow!
(as if inspired)

This is my goal! (stands at foot of grave.)



Soprano.

And the kiss of thy bride,
thy faithful bride,
Thou close on my mouth dost
lie,
Shall be proud indeed to rest
on thy lips,
Because thou goest forth
to die.

Alto.

The bird that gave thee its
plumes for thy cap,
Will be glad of it by
and by.
For those plumes will be
red with a hero's blood,
Because thou goest forth
to die.

Priest

My blessing, son, may it
claim thy soul,
When the waters of Death
rage high.
And the sign of the Cross I
make o'er thee,
Will be glad thou goest forth
to die.

Chorus.

Her kiss shall be proud to lie on thy lips
Because thou goest forth to die.
(Bis.)

The man who has slain
his wife with his sword,
And then with his hand
has laid her to rest,
Thou wilt know, O hero,
and thou wilt know,
because thou goest forth
to die.

Thou wilt know, O hero,
and thou wilt know,
because thou goest forth
to die.

Thou wilt know, O hero,
and thou wilt know,
because thou goest forth
to die.

E P I L O G U E

Scene:- The entrance of a rocky defile; mountains rising behind; a meadow covered with snow sloping up to the mouth of the gorge at side. Rocks right & left. The scene is lit by a waning moon, which gives place to dawn at the close.

At opening of Scene four of Stefan's soldiers seen putting last handfuls of earth on grave (L.C?) which is to left on slightly raises mound under an overhanging rock; a large tree shattered by lightning overhangs the grave.

(Enter Smaranda with Priest & Ileana; she stands under the great overhanging tree, looking & listening.)

(Fortune-teller discovered on meadow at rise of Curtain)

Priest.

The Valley of Death

Waits for us here, and Heaven's voice

Into that valley bids me go

To seek the dying and the dead -

Smaranda, wilt thou follow there ?

(Ileana, creeping softly behind Smaranda, takes her hand, pleadingly. Priest meanwhile has gone up gorge & looking back & seeing Ileana with Smaranda, he goes on into it.)

Ileana.

Dost thou not fear, Smaranda, sister ?

Who knows which way the fight hath turned ?

May not the foe be hastening hither ?

Smaranda.

Nay, fear and I have said farewell.

(noting the scene, for she has been watching the gorge till now)

Ileana,- see ! the snow-white meadow !
(as if inspired)

This is my goal ! (stands at foot of grave.)

E P I L O G U E

Scene:- The entrance of a rocky defile; mountains rising behind; a meadow covered with snow sloping up to the mouth of the gorge at side. Rocks right & left. The scene is lit by a waning moon, which gives place to dawn at the close.

At opening of Scene four of Stefan's soldiers seen rubbing last handfuls of earth on grave (L.C?) which is to left on slightly raised mound under an overhanging rock; a large tree sheltered by lightning overhangs the grave.

Enter Smaranda with Priest & Ileana; she stands under the great overhanging tree, looking & listening.)

(Torlone-feller discovered on meadow at rise of Curtain)

The Valley of Death
Waits for us here, and Heaven's voice
Into that valley bids me go
To seek the dying and the dead -
Smaranda, wilt thou follow there?

Priest.

Ileana, creeping softly behind Smaranda, takes her hand, pleadingly. Priest meanwhile has gone up gorge & looking back & seeing Ileana with Smaranda, he goes on into it.)

Doest thou not fear, Smaranda, sister?
Who knows which way the right path turned?
May not the foe be hastening hither?

Ileana.

Smaranda. Nay, fear and I have said farewell.
(Noting the scene, for she has been watching the gorge till now)

Ileana. - see! the snow-wide meadow!
(as if inspired)
This is my goal! (stands at foot of grave.)

(She now stands as if in a dream, gazing
before her with an exalted expression)

Ileana. Then here I watch and wait with thee.

(Enter the Mother, from same side)

Ileana. Thou here...

Mother. Shall age or feeble limbs
Prevail against me in this hour ?
My way-worn feet have scaled the heights -
Daughter, by thee I stand and wait.

Fortune-teller. (advancing & standing under shattered tree)
What seek ye here upon the meadow,
Where the white woman passes over,
Where the dark wings enfold you nigh ?

Mother. (approaching her with pitying gesture, scornful no more)
O faithless one - dost yet not see ?
Not see that heroes' souls borne upward
By conquering Love, rise dauntless, high
Above all fear of harm or death ?
Then look on her (points to Smaranda who stands
as before)
and learn, as I
Too late have learned !
(Pause)

Fortune-teller. (after gazing on Smaranda, begins softly, as if in
wonder, then as though seeing a vision)
Blind, blind was I who thought I saw !
But she has opened wide for me
My soul's dark windows, - and I see !
Though the white woman passes over,
I see - an angel's form she wears...
Smaranda. (I see - the wings that brood above us, (kneels)
Tho' once they loomed as dark as night,
Are angels' wings - and heavenly bright.

1st Soldier. (with enthusiasm)
Onward into the jaws of death

(She now stands as if in a dream, gazing
before her with an excited expression)

Then here I watch and wait with thee.

(Enter the Mother, from same side)

Then here...

Daughter, by thee I stand and wait.
My way-worn feet have scaled the heights -
Prevail against me in this hour?
Shall age or feeble limbs

(advancing & standing under sheltered tree)
Where the dark wings unfold you high?
Where the white woman passes over,
What seek ye here upon the meadow.

Mother, (approaching her with pitying gesture, scornful no more)
O faithless one - dost yet not see?
Not see that heroes' souls borne upward
By conquering love, rise dauntless, high
Above all fear of harm or death?
Then look on her (points to Smeranda who stands
as before)

Too late have I learned!
and learn, as I
(Pause)

(after gazing on Smeranda, begins softly, as if in
wonder, then as though seeing a vision)
Blind, blind was I who thought I saw!
But she has opened wide for me
My soul's dark windows, - and I see!
Through the white woman passes over,
I see - an angel's form she wears...
I see - the wings that brood above us, (Imela)
Tho' once they loomed as dark as night,
Are angels' wings - and heavenly bright.

Fortune-
teller.

(A tumult heard in the distance & the sound of pipes. All listen. One soldier appears, - then three or four - then a group.)

Fortune-teller. (in triumph)

This way the storm-wind flies - this way !
And on its pinions victory bears !

(Some of the Roumanian soldiers enter from the gorge; they are blood-stained & haggard, but wave their weapons in triumph)

(The stage is full)

Soldiers' Chorus

The pass is won !
The valley saved, the deed is done,
Urrarah, Urrarah !

The tyrant foe —
Must sheathe his sword, his might lies low.
Urrarah, Urrarah !

Now safe and free
May house & wife & children be,
Urrarah, Urrarah !

Hail to the brave,
Who gladly died our land to save, (pause) See,
Urrarah, Urrarah !

Priest. (startled)

Stefan lies there ?

Mother. (in ecstasy)

Did I not know that it must be ?
At last, at last, my eyes shall see

Priest. (to)

My hero crowned with victory !

Look up - be strong, Smaranda, give God thanks
For that thy hero hath won instant rest.

Smaranda. (who has been searching the faces of the men)

And he - Stefan ?

See his face on earth no more,
For where he fell, 'twas willed that he should sleep.

Is it not well that on the snow-white meadow
In peace ? See - even here.

Ist Soldier. (with enthusiasm)

Onward into the jaws of death into the grave

(A trumpet heard in the distance & the sound
of pipes. All listen. One soldier appears -
then three or four - then a group.)

Fortune-teller. (in triumph)
This way the storm-wind flies - this way!
And on its pinions victory bears!

(Some of the Romanian soldiers enter from the
gorge; they are blood-stained & haggard, but
wave their weapons in triumph)
(The stage is full)

Soldiers' Chorus

The pass is won!
The valley saved, the deed is done,
Urrrah, Urrrah!

The tyrant foe
Must sheathe his sword, his might lies low.
Urrrah, Urrrah!

Now safe and free
My house & wife & children be,
Urrrah, Urrrah!

Hail to the brave,
Who gladly died our land to save,
Urrrah, Urrrah!

Mother. (in ecstasy)
Did I not know that it must be?
At last, at last, my eyes shall see
My hero crowned with victory!

Smiranda. (who has been searching the faces of the men)
And he - Spelun?

Lat Soldier. (with enthusiasm)
Onward into the jaws of death

Careless of Death he led the foe,
Through the night's deep silence his horn rang out,
And our warriors gathered their strength amain,
And the rocks crashed down and the foe were slain.

Priest. We give God thanks for the soldier brave

Smaranda. (as before) With homage we bid farewell,
And he - Stefan ?

Soldiers. The earth was proud to feel his footsteps.

Fortune-teller. (pointing to gorge) Stefan lies there !
Glorious his lot hath been, yea, even
Like to the eagle's and the sun's.

(Smaranda turns wildly & questions the men;
then turns to Ileana, while soldiers speak
aside to Priest)

(kneeling)

1st Soldier. How may I tell the hero's death,
And yet not crush that bleeding heart,
Brave heart that gave him up for us ?
Go, holy man, strong soul, speak thou -
Tell her he had his utmost wish,
Not by the foeman's cruel sword

(The hero's heart was pierced, - but, swift
As fall the thunder-bolt from heaven,
So the rock smote his life from him;

Priest. (going) And scarce a human vestige left a cross; she sees
him For foemen to wreck vengeance on -
Yea - or for friend to honour ! (pause) See,
We laid him there.

I pray God grant thee the last grace of all,
The grace to yield with brave & willing heart

Priest. (startled) If he Stefan lies there ?

Yea, thou hast given thy hero to his country,
His country's heart doth thank thee for the gift.
The glorious (Pause.) oh, mar it not with heart,
But walk with never-failing courage on

Priest. (to Smaranda) to the end.

Look up - be strong, Smaranda, give God thanks
For that thy hero hath won instant rest.

(Smaranda looks wildly round)

Nay, thou mayest see his face on earth no more,
For where he fell, 'twas willed that he should sleep.
Is it not well that on the snow-white meadow
Stefan should lie in peace ? See - even here.

(points to grave)

And the rocks crashed down and the foe were slain.
And our warriors gathered their strength again,
Through the night's deep silence his horn rang out,
Careless of Death he led the foe.

Smarranda. (as before)
And he - Stefan?

Torlune- (pointing to gorge) Stefan lies there!
bell.

(Smarranda turns wildly & questions the men;
then turns to Ilsema, while soldiers speak
aside to Priest)

Is Soldier. How may I tell the hero's death.
And yet not crush that bleeding heart,
Brave heart that gave him up for us?
Go, holy man, strong son, speak thou -
Tell her he had his utmost wish,
Not by the foeman's cruel sword
The hero's heart was pierced, - but, swift
As fell the thunder-bolt from heaven,
So the rock smote his life from him;
And scarce a human vestige left
For foemen to wreak vengeance on -
Yes - or for friend to honour! (pause) See,
We laid him there.

Priest. (startled) Stefan lies there?

(Pause.)

Priest. (to Smarranda)
Look up - be strong, Smarranda, give God thanks
For that thy hero hath won instant rest.
(Smarranda looks wildly round)
Nay, thou mayest see his face on earth no more,
For where he fell, 'twas willed that he should sleep.
Is it not well that on the snow-white meadow
Stefan should lie in peace? See - even here.
(points to grave)

Ileana. (who has been kneeling over the grave)
(Smaranda with a cry flings herself on the grave.
Priest breaks off some branches from tree over
grave & plants a rough cross at head of grave,
while soldiers & others gather round - hats off.)

Priest. We give God thanks for the soldier brave
To whom with homage we bid farewell.

Soldiers. The earth was proud to feel his footsteps.
The sunshine proud to be his sunshine.
Glorious his lot hath been, yea, even
Like to the eagle's and the sun's.
For men must raise their heads to look on them.
And he hath died, even as the sunshine dieth,
In radiant light, God's cross upon his heart.
(kneeling)

Priest. (to soldiers & others)
Ye must not linger here. My brothers, hasten
Back to the village, where our captive people
Long for the news of freedom and of hope.

(Exeunt omnes except Priest, Ileana & Smaranda)

Priest. (going to Smaranda, tries to give her a cross; she sees
him not, her face buried in the grass.)

Smaranda ! Sorrow may not conquer thee;
I pray God grant thee the last grace of all,
The grace to yield with brave & willing heart
The sacrifice He asks.
Yea, thou hast given thy hero to his country,
His country's heart doth thank thee for the gift.
The glorious gift ! oh, mar it not with tears,
But walk with never failing courage on
Victorious to the end.

Ileana. (who has been bending near, laying her hand on Smaranda's shoulder)

She weepeth not, - her heart is lifted up.
Since for our country thus her hero died,
And not in vain; (sadly) but she hath gone with him
Gone as it might be to Death's very gates.
She dwells no more with us and hears no more
Our yearning voices - nay, not even mine !
Not even I, her sister of the cross,
Can now weep near her heart, or minister
To her great sorrow... see ! she hears us not.

Priest.

So it must be, Ileana, bear with it.
This of her burden is thy part to bear:
To stand aside and till she needs thee, wait.
The spirit that hath pierced the veil and lives
In sacred deep communion with the dead
Is scarce alive perchance to this our life,
And even such love as thine may not break in
Upon that hour.

(turning to Smaranda) God comfort thee, Smaranda !

(Exit Priest. Exit Ileana L. looking sadly once or twice in Smaranda's direction)

(Smaranda, finding she is alone, raises herself & looks round as if in a dream)

Ileana. (who has been bending near, laying her hand on
Smaranda's shoulder)
She weepeth not, - her heart is lifted up.
Since for our country thus her hero died,
And not in vain; (sadly) but she hath gone with him
Gone as it might be to Death's very gates.
She dwells no more with us and hears no more
Our yearning voices - nay, not even mine!
Not even I, her sister of the cross,
Can now weep near her heart, or minister
To her great sorrow... see! she hears us not.

Priest.
So it must be, Ileana, bear with it.
This of her burden is thy part to bear;
To stand aside and till she needs thee, wait.
The spirit that hath pierced the veil and lives
In sacred deep communion with the dead
Is scarce alive perchance to this our life.
And even such love as thine may not break in
Upon that hour.
(turning to Smaranda) God comfort thee, Smaranda!

(Exit Priest. Exit Ileana L., looking sadly once
or twice in Smaranda's direction)

(Smaranda, finding she is alone, raises herself
& looks round as if in a dream)

Smaranda I sorrow say not sorrow that
I may not sorrow that the dead are not of all,
The grave is cold with those who willing heart
The earth is cold, the earth is cold,
Yes, that dead with my heart be not sorrow,
His country's heart with mine for the sake,
The earth is cold, the earth is cold,
And with the earth the living sorrow be
Victims of the earth.

(She unexpectedly discovers the crucifix which the priest has laid beside her; with a cry she rises to her feet, looking at crucifix as if to try & collect her thoughts. Suddenly she kisses it passionately, clasping it to her heart.)

(Dawn gradually turns into a red light preceding the first rays of the sun)

(An expression of ecstasy & love is on her face)-

Only I know when I am in the grave
And see my heart's beloved, I shall stay,
Stay there for ever with my lightsome step,
My gaily ringing voice and happy smile.

C U R T A I N.